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Lutheran Women around the World

Lutheran Women around the World

REPORTS OF LUTHERAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

This documentation can be obtained through :

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Introduction

The reports comprised in this documentation were originally part of the preparatory materials for the LWF International Consultation for Women, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 5th-12th, 1976. They are not to be regarded as official documents of member churches (except in one case which is clearly indicated). However, this collection does represent a serious effort to assess the situation of women in the various Lutheran churches by those who are themselves leaders of the women's organizations at the local, regional or national level, or who are engaged in the work with and among women in other ways.

The reports contained in this document show great differences in style, content, understanding of the situation and reflection about theological determining factors. And yet, despite these differences, it is important to note that certain factors seem to be common to practically every situation.

The Women's Desk looks upon this documentation as a further contribution towards the process of reevaluating the situation of women within the Lutheran churches all over the world which has been going on for some time. It is important that we should become increasingly aware of how women view their own situation in the churches, how they judge their own participation or non-participation, how they understand the message which is preached to them and how they experience the Christian community which both welcomes and excludes them.

In reading this document one cannot help but pose basic ecclesiological questions such as :

- How can the church proclaim the liberating and saving message of Christ to the whole of the Christian community ?

- Is the church an eschatological sign of the manifestation of God's Kingdom on earth, as long as the structures of the fallen world are defended and perpetuated in it ?
- Can the church claim to be sign of the new community in Christ as long as the rules applied to part of its membership are different to those applied to others?
- Can the church proclaim the new community in Christ as long as this new community does not find expression in its structures, actions and daily life ?
- How does the church respond to the manifold needs of women and how is this response manifested in its structures, programmes and finances ?

Many more questions must be asked and many more hours spent in prayerful meditation. We hope that this document will not be read in a defensive way, but rather in loving openness allowing us to see our own inadequacies and enabling us to prepare for the metanoia of our hearts and minds so that we may help bring about a new life and a new community in Christ.

Eva Zabolai-Csekme

Geneva, February 1977

Africa

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon

In May 1975 the women's work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon was officially organized. A missionary was chosen to be full-time executive director of the work.

A women's work committee, consisting of two representatives from each of the four regional synods of the church, was organized and a constitution was officially drawn up.

The women's work is a part of the church structure and is placed as a division of the Department of Evangelism and Christian Education. The name of the organization is "WOMEN FOR CHRIST". We have elected a chairperson for our organization, a secretary and a treasurer.

Women's work in our church is not necessarily new work. It has been carried on at a local level throughout the areas by missionary wives and on regional level in recent years by missionary single girls. It is just within the last 5 to 6 years that it has been more efficiently organized at a general synod level.

The church is divided into four regions, with missionaries in full-time charge of the work in three of the regions. An African woman has been placed in charge of the fourth. She has not, as yet, been paid a salary. It is a bit difficult because she is not qualified enough for the duties of a regional president. She does read, but is unable to write and prepare materials for programmes.

We are trying to set up a programme where there will be a president elected for each district within each of the four regions. It will be her responsibility to create enthusiasm among the women in her district. She will also be responsible for going out on evangelistic trips in her district. She is chosen by the district but does not receive a salary for this work.

The expansion of the Christian women's movement "WOMEN FOR CHRIST" has created a great need for qualified local leadership. Therefore, the women's committee is making plans to hold leadership training courses for prospective group leaders.

There are plans to hold such leadership training courses in each region for pastor's wives, teachers' wives and others; also for district presidents. These courses will teach on such subjects as the Bible, health, the Christian home, training in witnessing, how to conduct meetings, singing, also some sewing and cooking. In order to be better informed about our Lutheran teachings, we will also have studies on Lutheran doctrines.

Each year a study programme is worked out for the women's groups. It is hoped that eventually each regional president will meet once a year with the district presidents in her region in order to teach this yearly programme to them. Then they in turn will gather the local presidents in their district to teach them the programme.

A programme which we must not neglect is the home-visitation programme. Person to person contact is so important. It shows that someone cares and is concerned about their souls. In my home-visitation programme I always leave some Christian literature in the home. Although many of them do not read, a number of the children are now attending school and can read to them.

Some local and regional projects in which our women have successfully participated and found much joy in working together are : bringing food and firewood to the hospital, visiting the sick, old and needy, comforting the bereaved, evangelism, helping college students, programme for the old people, Bible story dramatization, meeting once a week for prayer (this is in addition to their regular weekly meeting), giving financial help to seminary students, sponsoring a chaplain at the hospital, giving financial help to the region, giving money to a neighbouring church to buy material for their new church building, sewing curtains for the pastor's office, building guest houses and helping catechists and pastors who are in need.

The main objectives of our women's groups has been Bible study and how to grow in Jesus. In addition to Christian education we have emphasized family education such as family devotions, what is a Christian family, marriage, relationship between parents and children, the role of a mother in the home, the role of a father in the home, the role of children in the home, how can we make scripture important to our children and how to care for a home. We have also stressed health education and held special household courses.

The women can play a great part in the proclamation of the Gospel. They can visit members and prospects of the local church. Calling makes the lost people realize that they are loved and wanted by the members of the church. They can also go out on evangelistic trips.

One of the greatest hindrances and concern in our women's work is illiteracy. The parents favour educating the boys and not the girls. Often when they reach the ages of 11 or 12, they are taken out of primary school to prepare themselves for marriage which will take place when they

reach the age of 14 or 15. They will stay at home to help their mother care for the children, do the household tasks and learn to become farmers. Early pregnancies also hinder girls from continuing their education. Some parents do not permit their girls to continue because they do not trust the teachers.

Within the last few years there seems to be more of a hunger among our girls for an education, and I feel that in the next generation we will note a change in our women's work and development programme.

In 1972-73 sixty eight per cent of the school-age children in Cameroon attended primary school. The rate is highest in South Cameroon. In the Northern Province, where the greater part of the work of our church is being carried out, only twenty four per cent of all children attended primary school. Less than one quarter of these were girls.

An encouraging trend has been the increase of girls attending secondary schools. In 1976, of a total of 166 students at our secondary school in N'gaoundéré 39 are girls. About three girls a year complete the course and receive their diploma. This is equivalent to our High School in America.

It would be an asset if the parents would at least permit their girls to finish their primary grades. How this will develop will be determined by how necessary the parents see the need of education.

An unquestionable need exists in our area - the need to educate our women and girls.

Education now is changing the life style of the people of Cameroon, perhaps the women's most of all. As yet, not many women know how to read but as adult literacy programmes gain momentum, the horizons of the women are lifted and they become more open to new ideas and new ways of doing things.

The radio has also played a large part in this changing attitude. As women hear news from other parts of their country and the rest of the world, their conception of life can no longer be encompassed by what happens in their gardens and around their homes. Life becomes broader and their part in it becomes more significant.

Husbands may also be a hindrance in our women's work. A husband may be a Moslem and give his wife no encouragement to attend meetings. He may even forbid her to attend. Also a Christian husband may want to show his authority by refusing to let his wife attend. Of course, it often happens that the men resist women's attempts to move forward into a less restricted role in life. One of our catechists had a very intelligent, literate wife, but he refused to let her become a leader in the church women's group. Leadership seems to be traditionally a male function, so when women, especially gifted women, assume positions of leadership, the male ego is threatened.

Laziness also keeps women away from participating with the others. It is difficult to keep a continuing, interesting programme going. There is no variety and we lack good imaginative leadership.

Work is also a hindrance. About three days seems to be the maximum length of time for which women can be absent from their home duties in order to attend a workshop. However, in one area the women were permitted to attend a two-week workshop. This would not have been acceptable a couple of years ago.

The many different languages used within our church area makes leadership development difficult.

There is also the conflict of culture which missionaries have had to face. On the one hand they have been criticized for destroying cultural values, and, then on the other hand, criticized for not being willing to modernize an area.

Perhaps another problem within our society is that leaders are pointing to the fact that they do not want to accept western habits or ways of doing things. They may be right, but I am sure they would not be interested in going back to some of their traditional practices.

In our women's work we hope to :

- inspire each individual member to a deeper consecration to our Saviour
- to encourage and give an opportunity to each member to witness and to be a testimony before non-Christians
- to encourage our women to participate in the work of the church
- to develop a programme of study that will strengthen their faith and life in Christ
- to help spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ

We want

to LIVE for Christ
to LEARN about Christ
to WORK for Christ
and FELLOWSHIP in Christ.

We hope that our women's meetings will enrich their Christian knowledge; that it will help liberate our women; that it will help the women to have a greater self-respect and to help her think for herself. Several of our women are taking hold of the work, participating in discussions, and are much freer of their former shyness.

The church has been instrumental in opening up opportunities for women by freeing them through education and helping them take responsibilities.

The liberating force of the Gospel has had a tremendous effect on the status of women in Cameroon. The traditional role of women in most areas has been a subservient one. The liberating action has been greatest in those areas where the Gospel of God's love in Jesus Christ had had free reign. For it is through the Gospel that all people have equal status - "There is no difference between Jew and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28)

As far as women's integration in the development of Cameroon is concerned, I suppose we can say that it is in its early stages and is going to be a gradual process for years to come. It seems to be progressing rather slowly in our area.

At the present time, it seems that the role of women is to care for their children, prepare the meals, draw water, gather fire wood and do the gardening. These daily activities keep her occupied and leave very little time for outside activities; this means her contributions to local activities are limited. Most of the women seem to be very much tied to their homes. Their world is essentially limited to the day by day happenings in their own villages.

Gardening seems to be one of the most important tasks in our area. The greatest part of agricultural work is done by the women. They do most of the marketing by selling their products on the market thus making a profit and being able to purchase some personal items which they desire. Some of the women keep the proceeds received from their sales, but others are obliged to give the proceeds to their husbands. I feel the women have gained a certain degree of independence through this project.

Ploughs and tractors in our area have not helped our women a great deal in the preparation of the land. The women labourously turn over the soil by hand. It is the woman's job to do the work, but the man will help get the soil ready. Agriculture - a woman's job with the man as her helper. The mother will also engage the help of her children, especially the girls. This, of course, prevents them from attending school.

It is interesting to note that last year in my village, Meiganga, the government placed an African male worker in charge of the development programme. In the fall he set up a week's programme for the women to discuss various topics, e.g. health, the role of husband and wife in a home, the role of parents in the education of their children, why pay taxes, etc. They are planning a similar programme this fall, but have included an hour on agriculture. This is interesting because most of the gardening is done by the women, but they have been given no training in agriculture. With the beginning of these government programmes, these leaders will be able to guide and change the attitudes of our women - and men. It will help stimulate an interest in the work among our women and they will feel they are playing an important part in this programme.

Members from our Christian church were invited to attend and to speak. An interesting fact was that the majority of the women attending were Christian women affiliated with the church.

It might be well to remember that development without Christ leads to corruption.

There is a need for education among our women; there is a need for a change in the attitude of men towards the role of women in our developing programme and a need for a change in the attitude of women - that they may see the importance of being able to fit into this programme and play a significant part in this developing country. They have potentialities, capabilities, and no doubt many hidden talents which are "untapped".

The first tasks of a woman are her responsibilities to God, to her husband, to her children, and to her home. If her duties and her role as a mother, a wife, a home-maker fail, then the church also fails and will not have strength because they, as individuals, make up the church. If the home is neglected, how can the church survive ?

Women will attain greater and greater freedom in Cameroon. My prayer is that in Cameroon the liberation of women will be freedom for an enlarged and more fruitful service to others in the name of Christ, rather than merely freedom to serve oneself; that through the women's work their faith will be strengthened and they will experience a deeper life in Christ.

Verna Syverson

Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia

The Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia was formally established some years back, but it was not until 1950 that all the Synods joined it and thereby established an evangelical independent church in Ethiopia. It has been one of the objectives of the Church to see the whole work as one unity. Women in the church have therefore not been organized as a separate body. As the socialization of the country goes on, more and more women are organized in women's associations. These associations include all women in the areas where they are established, and will thus also include the Christian women as members of these associations.

The Women's Office of the ECMY came into being at the beginning of 1974, with a secretary to lead the work. The Women's Office is a section of the Evangelism Department, like the Youth Office, and the Women's secretary is a staff member of the Evangelism Department. The Women's secretary has an Advisory Committee for Women which meets once or twice a year for review, evaluation and planning of the work. In this committee the women's secretary has voice but no vote.

This structure is likely to be changed, and there will be an Advisory Committee on Evangelism including both women's work and youth work. Apart from this there will be consultation once or twice a year where the Synod's women secretaries or coordinators will meet for exchange of views, planning of work. Policy matters will go to the Administrative Committee on Evangelism for acceptance.

The Women Secretary is a full-time worker. When necessary she may employ an assistant to help her in the work.

It is still an indisputable truth that the women in our society are much behind. This may be due to cultural, social and political reasons.

We have, however, seen great changes in this direction during the last two years, and we hope it will continue.

In the meantime our concern is to teach both men and women about the woman's place in the home, church and society. We can mention several problems related to women such as : choice of spouse, dowry, the heavier work given to her, her right to share in decisions.

Regarding our church many of the above stated concerns will have relevance also here. The Church has several times taken up the issue of how to give women more representation in the church work. Resolutions from the last General Assembly at Easter 1976 reveal this concern very clearly :

"A strong appeal for greater involvement of women in the decision-making process of the ECMY and suggested that at future General Assemblies at least 25% of the delegates be women. Her recommendation was referred to Committee."

For the women's work the following aim has been adopted by the Advisory Committee for Women. It is divided into two parts and reads :

The aim of women's work is :

- to help the women grow in their Christian faith and know their spiritual gifts which God has given them, and in word and action serve as living witness for the Lord.
- To help the women to improve and develop their living conditions so that they can give useful service both to themselves, their family, the church and the society.

In addition to this goal women in the synods have later pointed out that "proclaiming Christ to non-believers" should be added.

The Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus has 8 synods of which half have synod secretaries or coordinators for women's work. In these synods more and more women workers are being employed to serve on the district, parish and congregation level. Women groups are established and encouraged to be established. These groups have particular spiritual and counselling value. Women workers teach the Bible, home economics, Christian family life and stewardship / leadership. They may work both through women groups within the congregation and through the associations, carrying out home visits, demonstration plots.

Among our activities are courses for women intensifying teaching in the above mentioned subjects, courses for local leaders, where stress is laid on stewardship/leadership as well as on Bible teaching and refresher courses for women workers.

There are also consultations for women involving work secretaries / coordinators, and in the coming year there will probably be a six-month course for leaders of women work.

Elizabeth Karorsa

Lutheran Church in Liberia

My first impression on my arrival was that there was no permanent or definite programme arranged by the women as is the case in some churches where there is a full time president and secretary who man the affairs of the women. Everything is done voluntarily and the following is what I gathered from my visit:

It was observed by the First President Ms. Payne * that more women could join the church if the Sunday service could be conducted in the people's own language. Because most of the women could not understand the English, they did not attend church again.

As a result, three services are conducted every Sunday. Two in the native languages: Pele and Loma, and the other is in English. It would be of interest to learn that the people use their local cultural drums to accompany the hymns.

All the women in these tribes take an active part in the running of the church. For instance, it was observed that the National President can speak English and the two vice Presidents are from Pele and Loma speaking groups. By this, the tribes are not left out in the running of the church. They take their full share in supporting the church.

The women's group performs some activities such as mid-week prayer meetings, sewing, baking and maintaining the church.

Mid-Week Prayer: At this prayer meeting all the three groups meet together. The Bible is read in the three languages i.e. English, Pele and Loma, with the interpretation being done in all the three languages. They sing and pray together as a group.

* President is now :
Ms. Casselia Stewart

Sewing: Everybody brings used materials to the sewing class. They sew them and then send some of the dresses to orphans and disabled children. The rest are sold. By sewing these dresses the women became competent in needlework.

Easter Bakery: The young ladies in the women's group have formed a small group called 'Easter bakery'. On every Saturday they gather at the President's house and bake small cakes and biscuits. They send the cakes and biscuits to church on Sunday and the church members buy them after church. They do this to raise funds for the women's group and at the same time, the young ladies learn some basic cookery.

Church: The women see to it that the church room is in order. They decorate the altar and prepare and clean Communion Vessels, organise the collection and take part in conducting Sunday School.

Women's Day: On women's day the women conduct the service and the proceeds go to the women's fund.

Support:

Monrovia: The women support the pastor and two laymen. The two laymen are fully paid by the women group.

Bong Mine: I have seen that the local people are very hard working. They support the pastor and the youth. They have been able to provide the choir with about fifty robes. In the surrounding villages the women have made rice and cassava farms to support the pastors and the church.

Nimba: The women have made two rice farms and a cassava farm. The proceeds go to the church fund and with the help of the men they have built some houses which they rent out.

Salala Area: The women have peanut and rice farms and the proceeds also go to support the pastors and the churches in the area. In fact the English speaking group only contribute a little to the up-keep of the church.

Other Support:

The women have a fund which they called "The smallest Coin". Every women contributes one cent 'the smallest coin' to this fund every Sunday. At the end of the year, the money that is contributed to this fund is sent to the World Relief Fund in Geneva to support victims of drought, earthquakes, etc.

Dues:

Every woman pays dues of ten cents (ten Pesewas) a month and each town or village pays its yearly dues to the national quarters.

Yearly Retreats:

All women in the country attend this yearly retreat. Each village sends about three representatives to the retreat. At this retreat they have bible discussions, invite some people to talk to them on child care, and they discuss matters concerning the up keep of the group. Elections are also held at this retreat to choose their National President and the two Vice Presidents.

Quarterly Retreats:

At these retreats, the National President visits the districts and conducts the retreats. Many women come to the retreats. Some walk about a three day journey to attend the retreat, and the discuss their problems with the National President.

By-Laws and Constitutions: Each group of the Lutheran Women Association (L.W.A.) has its own constitution and by-laws.

Problems:

Almost all the parishes have the problem of organising the women for meetings and planning other activities of the group. The President has to drive from house to house to pick them up to go to the meetings. At times they make excuses and do not turn up. This hinders sometimes the activities of the group.

Ruth Mensah

Malagasy Lutheran Church

The Island of Madagascar, geographically speaking, lies in the Southern Hemisphere, off the east coast of Africa. A large Island of some 550,000 square meters, there is a present population of over eight million people, of whom eighty per cent are farmers.

The Lutheran Church began its work in Madagascar in 1867 in the Central Highlands. As more missionaries arrived, the Church spread and prospered, so that by 1888 the Church had entered the South-East area, and by 1890 the South-West part of the Island.

The first missionaries to the Island, however, had arrived in 1818, sent by the London Missionary Society, and that group also worked in the Central Highlands.

During the first eighty years, the three Lutheran sending agencies (two American, one Norwegian) worked alone in their respective areas, but in 1950 those 'mission' areas were brought together under one General Synod, with seven Regional Synods, to form the Malagasy Lutheran Church.

At the present time, the Malagasy Lutheran Church unites with the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar to compose the Protestant Council of Madagascar.

Following that progress of the Church, the Congress of Lutheran Women of Madagascar along with the women of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar joined the Council of Church Women in Madagascar.

The women in the Malagasy Lutheran Church are formally organized into the Congress of Malagasy Lutheran Women.

The women have chosen to be a part of the program of the Church with an elected executive secretary on the national level. The seven Synods elect

an executive committee of five, including the Executive Secretary. No one receives a salary, but they are remunerated for expenses incurred.

The women are also organized on local, regional and national levels, with elected executive boards.

The women of the Church are concerned about the spiritual growth of members. We still find those women who find it difficult to put aside tribal customs, which are not compatible to the Christian witness. There are women who do not have sufficient confidence in themselves to accomplish anything; some make light of Christian fellowship and see only weakness in worship. Out of embarrassment, there is a reluctance to change customs.

The women accept the task and responsibility in the teaching of the illiterate in the countryside as there are still some sixty percent who do not know how to read or write.

At this time, when there is a stir of activity concerning the equal rights of men and women, the women are working together with the men in the promotion and proclamation of the Gospel throughout the Island, for there are still large areas under the domination of idol worship.

The specific targets of the women are: 1. to encourage the promotion of the Gospel and the teaching of the Bible, 2. to financially support these projects, and 3. especially to help support teachers in areas that have not yet heard the Gospel. Financial aid is given for scholarships to students attending church-affiliated schools, including the Seminary.

There are weekly meetings of the women with Bible study and visitation. A yearly Synod meeting is held, and every three years there is a national gathering.

The low economy of our nation, particularly in the southernmost part of the Island, makes it difficult for the Church to be self-supporting. As education becomes more wide-spread, we are hoping for stronger church leadership.

We participate in the Council of Protestants in Madagascar, the Lutheran World Federation, and the African Council of Churches. We are also included in the World Council of Churches.

As women of the Church realize their importance, they should accept greater responsibility in strengthening the nation. This would begin in teaching the children their worth as people. They should be taught that worship and love of God is not something to be taken lightly. There should be instruction for marriage, based on God's plan according to the Bible. We should help create a state of mind that would desire the betterment of all mankind and not selfish selfbenefit. In our love for our country we should do all we can to improve the economy, the education of people in all areas, and especially a spiritual growth based on God's love.

"In Christ, God came, not to be served, but to serve." (Mark 10:45)

May all honour be given to the Lord, Jesus Christ, in all that is done in His Name to advance this country and all nations in the world.

Hilda Sana

Lutheran Church of Nigeria

The women in the Lutheran Church of Nigeria are organized formally. The constituted name of our organization is the 'Nigerian Lutheran Women's Association' (N.L.W.A.). The women's work is not seen as a structural part of the church. However, the church recognizes with gratitude the activities and services of the women. We have no representation in any of the boards or committees of the church nor do we have either a budget or the right to vote in the church's administration. We therefore have no secretariat or department for our work in the church. Our Association is made up of member-organizations from congregations of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria.

We first organized on the congregational, parish and district level. Then on 29th March, 1975 our association became formally organized on the national level and now meets three times a year.

The leadership of women's work is voluntary. Most of the leaders are full-time traders, business women or teachers but they volunteer much of their time for the association.

Concerns and problems of women :

One of the major problems in our society is the lack of education. Our society welcomes women to participate in services and jobs but there are not many who are able to do so. It is a very insignificant few who have the basic minimum of education to qualify for any service in society. The church faces the same problem. Although in the Lutheran Church of Nigeria there are quite a number of able women who could be of service to our church, the church has not yet provided adequate opportunities. There is on the other hand the problem that educated women in the church have no inclination to join our women's organization nor to contribute to our programmes or work. We seem to be looked upon as a bunch of fools. Our

failure to have among us our highly trained sisters has affected our whole programme and work.

We are a rather new and young organization. I am not ashamed to say that our goals might sound rather limited and unimportant to some, but due to the acute need of pastors and trained church leaders in the Lutheran Church of Nigeria, one of the goals of our organization is to help train pastors who will be sent to unevangelized areas of our country. We desire also to give financial help to the Bible Society in translating and printing the scriptures in some languages of Nigeria. We want to support our Synod and make it self-sufficient in the future.

But as we meet with new problems our vision of our work is sharpened. We are now set on seeking ways and means of establishing ourselves by choosing and training leaders for our group.

We do not have many organized activities among the women of the church. In the local congregations our women keep the worship places clean and neat - sweeping, dusting, and other tasks. We organize visitation groups on the local level, which are responsible for visiting the sick, the delinquent and the imprisoned. Monthly donations are made to the destitute and needy.

We have no links with other organizations or ecumenical movements.

We subscribe to St. Peter's declaration of all Christian peoples as royal priesthood. We should indeed be telling others of the promises of God who called us also out of darkness into His marvellous light.
(1 Peter 2:9)

Women everywhere hold a unique position in the development of humanity ; in that they can constitute a great force in the education of the child children. They can also lead in the planning and organizing of families to meet the present need in our world. Where we are accepted, our counsel will go a long way to shaping the morals and lives of people.

Martha J. Udoma

Lutheran Church of Christ

in the Sudan, Nigeria

Women in this part of the former Northern Region of Nigeria form a small privileged group of those who received some education in the early nineteenth century when the missionaries arrived in our area. This fact led to some few advantages we now enjoy over other women in society. But this does not mean that the church is completely free of illiteracy.

Despite some recurrent problems women in my church have been formally organized within a group known as the Fellowship of Women of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria.

This work is part of the structure of the church and has a secretary. There is also a full-time foreign worker. But plans are being made to employ a local woman for this post.

Going deeper into the situation we find lack of interest in the Fellowship by the young women, unemployment and illiteracy which form major areas of concern among our Christian women in the society and the church. Young women do not participate actively in the activities because they tend to feel that most of these things are for the elderly of the church. The widows who have many children to support are usually prey's to polygamous husbands and therefore lose their full church membership.

The conflict between local and Western cultures does not help in the educational development of society or in the church as most parents tend to educate their male children rather than the female because the belief is that the women's place is in the kitchen, and since "a woman never rot", the parents are always contented to think that all their illiterate daughters will surely end up no matter the man's and daughter's degree of literacy or illiteracy. Therefore women's participation in local matters has not been quite encouraging.

Anyway, elderly women, who have held unto their struggles in the church try to maintain their goals. They support financially evangelists to the surrounding non-Christian villages. They hold Bible study meetings with groups in villages and towns. They visit old people's homes to chat and comfort the weak and old. They visit the sick and the imprisoned on Sundays. Besides this, Women Fellowship meetings are held weekly by village women groups. District group leaders meet once a month and retreat groups, mainly for women, are also organized at local levels.

These activities are mainly to help strengthen the role of women in the church, but our women are yet to be made to understand the equality of human beings before God and therefore do their best in all ways possible.

Once the society and the church are able to understand that the nation's development lies in the hands of its women, who form the core of its nation, moral obligations will form part of the normal everyday life of our society.

Fibie N. Nadah

Evangelical Lutheran Church

in Southern Africa

(South-Eastern Region)

We here in South Africa have women's organizations in our church. The most common one is the Prayer Women's League. This organization is of long standing in the history of the church, it has been developing over the span of many years to become what it is today.

This organization is most important in the life of some of our congregations here. The activities of the league in the past concerned themselves mainly with spiritual matters, recently however there has been a strong movement towards caring for the complete needs of the person.

Concerns

Spiritual : Prayer meetings, Bible instruction

Deaconate : The care of the sick, care of under-privileged

Illiteracy, Caring for the home

Education of children

Financial problems.

The above-mentioned Prayer Women's League is part of the church structure and is voluntary. It is closely linked with the rest of the congregation, but it has its own constitution.

The leader in some parishes is the pastor's wife, in others again, a woman from the congregation. This organization even has a uniform of its own, which differs from one racial group to another. We are now endeavouring to have unified this for the whole of the Evangelical Lutheran churches in South Africa.

Problems encountered by the Women in the Church

The role of the woman is theoretically based on full equal rights with men, but in practice it does not work out that way. It is said that we may be elected to all councils in the church, but so far we hold offices mainly on congregational and parish levels. No woman ever served on circuit council or on diocesan council, however, there were some women delegates to the last synod of the Northern dioceses.

This in my opinion is grossly unfair as women are by far in the majority in our congregations. The reasons given for us not serving on the latter councils are that we are timid in speaking up in meetings. However, if we do speak up, not much attention is paid to us, because of prejudices against us which have their origin in tradition.

We women have a tug of war amongst us: there is friction between pastor's wives and church workers, there is disagreement between Prayer Women's League and the women of the congregation about finances. In some areas women are not enthusiastic about church work. There are often incompetent leaders, and a lack of suitable leaders in the more secular fields.

The problem of split families, caused by the migration labour system is also a very great obstacle.

A major problem, that causes great concern, is the breaking down of moral standards among our youth, caused by the free use of contraceptives, and the ready availability of them. Family planning and birth control is not only practised by married couples these days.

Like all other things in Christianity, there seems to be a waning in some congregations of the Prayer Women's League, which needs constant revival and even orientation because most of the members are in the older age groups. The younger women are just not attracted to the League.

What I think the role of women should be regarding proclamation of the Gospel

Women should be allowed to proclaim the Gospel of God. For it was to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary that the Angel from Heaven spoke on the morning of the Resurrection, telling them Christ has risen from the dead, and that they should go and tell it to the Disciples. It was on that morning that we women were chosen to proclaim the Resurrection of the risen God. Matt. 28 V 5-7 CR.S.V).

On their way to the disciples, Jesus himself met them. (Matt. 28 V 9-10) The risen Christ himself sent these women to tell his brethren to go to Galilee where they would see him. It was women who first saw the risen Christ. It was to women that the message of the resurrection was given first, and I therefore do not see how there can be prejudices against female pastors. Christ himself sent women to proclaim his resurrection, not his disciples.

My personal opinion is, that women should be given a chance to prove themselves competent or otherwise. They should receive the same training as male pastors, and after completion of their training and being ordained, could serve a probation period prescribed by the church, with one of the experienced pastors. She could then be given a congregation of her own, after proving herself. There should be no limitations of her scope, because of her sex. Women have proved themselves in the past to be just as good as men and in some cases better in their common professions e.g. law and medicine, so why not theology?

It is said by the church that there is nothing to prevent women candidates from being trained for the ministry, but so far there have been no applicants.

This may well be true because in our church here in South Africa we were until recently ignorant of the fact that women could be trained as pastors, so we could not apply for something which we did not know existed.

What we do have is theological training for female church workers. This again is also not so popular, probably because of the lack of scope and freedom of movement within our scope.

Where the church is concerned, this poses a difficulty, namely that most church workers marry on completion of their training. As a mother of young children here, home is her main concern; she finds little time for the work that she has been trained for.

However to my thinking this should not pose a problem. As in this day and age there are many professional married women and married working women, why should a church worker not marry and still continue with her work; the same applies to the female pastor. The same arrangement that a professional and working housewife and mother makes for the care of her home and children could be made by the female pastor and church worker.

Here again we come across the age old story of the primary function of a woman being to raise a family, and to subordinate to her husband.

Ruth Greeff

Evangelical Lutheran Church in South-West Africa

The women in our church are organized formally; the organization is called "Women Work of Evangelical Lutheran Church". Our women work is part of the church structure. We have a women centre at Ohahandja, which was built with the help of friends in Germany and with voluntary donations from different small women groups.

At the centre are three women who are full-time church workers among the women. They have one of the church cars and can therefore drive from place to place to visit the different women groups.

Besides the three full-time leaders there are five so-called head leaders, chosen by different women because of different languages. Each group has its own leader, elected by the local women, who works part time.

The elected leaders assemble twice a year at the women centre to listen to lectures, to have discussions and receive information about their work. It is the main goal of our women to lead a Christian life.

Our women activities are all on the local level : visiting the sick in hospitals, especially in the big cities, reading the Bible and praying together with them. There are also visits to prisoners and other forms of social work. These are all voluntary activities.

We have no particular international or ecumenical contacts, but we have these contacts through the church.

Most of our women are very passive as far as the women's liberation is concerned since not all women have the same attitude towards equality. They are bound by the old traditions. Many of these women have not yet overcome their feelings of inferiority and still regard themselves as

subordinate to men. Because of this we have very few educated women. The talents that as human beings we have received from God are lost.

There is a definite need for change. What we need is the full recognition of women's human dignity, out of which will come a fuller recognition of our own rights as well as those of men. If both men and women had equal opportunities to be educated in the skills which would make the best use of our talent, then we would become aware of our rights and potential. We would be more willing to become independent and to accept greater responsibility. We would then work together for the spiritual life and total human development of our lovely country of Namibia. Both men and women are responsible and are the key factors in the development of our church and country.

Magdalena Hoebes

Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church, South-West Africa

The women in our church are still in the process of organizing themselves on the local and national level. The organization is voluntarily associated with the church. The leadership of women's work is voluntary.

In the ELDC we have about fifty congregations. In each congregation seven women are chosen to form a committee which leads the women's work of the congregation. They prepare meetings three or more times a month. All women from the age of seventeen may participate at these meetings. During the meetings we do practical work and Bible study; information is given concerning home economics, child welfare and other topics of interest to women. The problem of the women in our church is that they retrench themselves. They always say "we are old and can do other things, but this is the work of the younger women".

As I said in the beginning, we are in the process of organizing women's work. We have only one leader among us, Rev. W. Miina Mpinga Amweelo, who always tries to explain to us the important things we could do in our church. At least once a year she prepares a consultation to which each congregation sends at least four women.

The role of women with regard to proclamation should be seen in different places as well as at home (to the neighbours, husband and children). A woman is an important person in the house. A woman is always providing.

I think women could contribute toward human development in our church through their work. They can do something and they begin to understand it. I hope that it will continue to progress in the future.

Maria Nakafingo

The work has continued in the year 1975. There has been the great hinderance, however, of having to divide oneself between teaching work in the Institute and this work in the whole church.

In spite of this, I did visit some congregations and made the scholars from the domestic school give some lectures on home care and other things. In this way women could see how very advantageous it is to send their daughters to the domestic school to be instructed in the subjects which help the women both in the home and in society.

I also tried to prepare some of the girls, while I left others to give lectures without instruction. I did this to show the women that without proper preparation the periods are of little use and people do not like them, whereas, if a period has been well prepared, people profit from it. It was a pity that I did not practise that in more than three congregations. I am delighted to see that the domestic school scholars of the previous year are now being made use of in congregations in women's meetings. Although I do travel much myself, I am very happy that teachers and nurses of many congregations have taken responsibility of this work and often they write to me where they have difficulties or come to see me about the work. This has been of great help to this work.

I am also grateful to the Church Council of ELOC for their devotion to this work and their effort to give all the instruction that is asked of them. The local boards in congregations have also been trying their best. When the Church Council of ELOC had decided that a course for leaders would be given in Engela and in Ongwediva, congregations made the effort to send their leaders there. Some pastors sent some women there even though no local boards had been elected in their congregations. Later they elected their own boards.

It has been a cause for sorrow in this work to see how the old heathenism is appearing among women, so also witchcraft, sorcery and other such things. Some women leave their homes to go to the pubs, some of those who are not married bring their mothers many children and do not want to take care of them themselves.

Women here noticed that we receive help from the Red-Cross office. The Red Cross sends us milk so that children may be well nourished and do not die of hunger. In this way the number of children has grown. Food often runs out. Some children who have suffered from hunger have been placed in TB-wards, but it is clear that there is nothing but hunger the matter, as the child has not had enough to eat from its mother's breast; so the nurses tell us. The shortage of food has been caused by the Angolans who crossed the border. The office can no longer give sufficient relief.

Yet we are grateful to the Red Cross as it gave us about 500 pieces of clothing last year. Nearly everybody in the church received something. The district superintendents and some women helped by looking up those in need and then passing on cloths to them. Some of our schoolchildren also gave assistance. Pastors and women have not only helped in the way I have mentioned above. They have also helped spiritually. They have noticed people's difficulties and cared for their spirits.

This is a difficult time for women, for many have lost their children. Some have crossed the borders. This has caused trouble for many women. Some complain that the Radio Owambo worries them. Some have doubts about God; they say their prayers are not heard, for their children do not come back, and therefore many have lost their health.

Among these there are people who help others, bear others' burdens, show them where to look for help and relief of spirit. A great problem of women these days is alcohol. Homes are no longer taken care of. Children are not fed; therefore many children steal. This often happens because men go to drinking places. The wife, to keep the home peaceful, as she says, also begins to drink. That is why we hear of children being burnt in the fire because the mother has neither strength nor sense, and allows the child to walk anywhere it wants to, until it falls into the fire. Some men cause their wives enormous trouble when they come home from a drinking bout. Often they want to make drunkards of their wives too. Some men beat their wives if they do not want to drink; some beat them because they do not want to be accused of wasting money in drinking.

I have often discussed this with some women, and pastors have spoken with the men who have families. Some have seen the danger and have rejected alcohol, but others continue drinking. Even today this misfortune is there. As for myself I can only ask: What shall we do? These things cause great trouble to the people and to our church, if we see no way of helping. I thank the Church Council of ELQC for praying for us and working with us in this matter.

Wilhelmina Amweelo

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania

Here in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) we have 13 Synods and Dioceses. They have different constitutions and different ways of working, but each of them has a women's department. These organizations differ in name. We prepare leadership training seminars, Bible Study Guides, World Day of Prayer Programmes, etc. together.

In each of these departments we have a full-time secretary or director. In each case these departments work within the Synod and Diocese as part of the structure, not as a separate body. So far we do not have a women's department on a national level but a community which binds together in action the various Synods and Dioceses. In early 1977 we shall have a Women's Department on a national level with a full-time staff member. In this way we are part of the Church structure starting at national level, regional level and down to village level where women's work is included constitutionally in the responsibilities of local congregations.

We have full-time workers in Synods and Dioceses on a regional level; some have full-time workers at the district level, in other areas this is done voluntarily. Quite a few local congregations are able to occupy a full-time Parish Worker for women's work and other parish duties. We have more Parish Workers occupied at local level than on district level.

The special problems and concerns in our society and Church are the problems of marriage, children's education, and upbringing of children in the Christian faith in a changing society. Previously it was the duty of Church Schools to teach the Christian faith and ethics to children, but now the Christian home must emphasize it more and more, thereby.

Places are becoming more and more urbanized; so women are therefore getting

vocational training and studying home economics to enable them to contribute to the family income in ways other than farming. An income through farming alone would not always be sufficient for a whole family.

1. In the first place our aim in women's work is to enable the women to serve the Lord in their families in everyday life, in order to build up strong families who are firm in their Christian faith.
2. The second goal of the Church is to get enabled women to participate fully in the responsibility and service of the Church.
3. Society has given women a new place of responsibility. It is our aim to fill these places with human understanding and knowledge of the new partnership between men and women in all spheres of life.
4. It is also our goal to give skills and education of varying kinds to women to enable them to contribute to the family income through better farming, cottage industries, self-assistance programmes, vocational training or other kinds of training for employment.

The activities vary from the traditional Bible studygroup in a village to seminars and discussion groups about family life, sewing classes and adult education.

All of these groups which are sponsored by the Lutheran Church are organized either in their parishes or at district or regional level as long as they are groups.

We also have inter-denominational groups which conduct and participate in activities of the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) and its member Churches. Other groups are organized by the "Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanzani" (UWT) which is the women's national political organization. Women of all Churches and beliefs take part in these groups to form the National Organization.

At the national level ecumenical contacts are very strong in the various activities of the CCT. They are not organized separately, but are part of the duties and activities of the CCT. Because of lack of funds there is a limitation of contacts internationally. Contacts of the All African Conference of Churches (AACC) is fully used. Last year, we also had the opportunity to send two delegates to visit the Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea. It is our hope to receive visitors of the Women's Department of the Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea during the coming year. Visitors from Europe are coming and women from this Church are visiting Europe. There are possibilities of exchange, but they are limited.

All women are aware of their responsibility to proclaim the Gospel, women of our Church are being given the possibility of studying theology, but very few have taken up theological training. We are hoping that the Church will recognize women as partners in proclaiming the Gospel, and will integrate them more and more in the services of the Church.

Both the nation and the Church are aware of the capabilities of women and

waiting for their contribution towards human development (medical work, social work, education in administration, etc.). It is our task and our goal to fill these places given to us with love, understanding and skill.

Barbara Kniest

*(On behalf of the Women's Work
ELCT)*

The participation of youth and women in the service in our church has been inadequate and unsatisfactory until now.

By 'service' we do not only mean being employed, but also all kinds of help in witnessing for Christ. The question is whether or not the church gives these people a chance to serve. Here we mean the church as an institution and also Christianity in general.

General Description

When Christianity came, the native people had their own culture and traditions in their everyday life. In these traditions, women were slighted, they were treated disrespectfully and were, to some extent, left behind.

The women had no rights in clan-property inheritance. Inheritance was the business of men only. The male child had all the rights, even if he was not the first born. If there were no male children in a family, the father considered himself childless. This contributed to the frequency of polygamous marriages.

In leadership, women were forgotten and were not given a chance to express themselves or to give advice. They were considered unwise and not as clever as men. Leadership was therefore in the hands of men alone although there were capable women who could have taken up some of the positions of leadership.

There were many taboos for the women. There were many things they were not allowed to do, things which they could have done. They were not allowed to eat some foods, although they did all the cooking. It also happens that these foods they were banned from eating were either the rare specialities or the most delicious. Children belonged to the father.

Polygamy lowered the position of the women further. Many men married to "get children" or increase the number of workers on their farms. Therefore the value of the women lay in their usefulness as tools, also as a sign of prestige, richness and greatness of the men. A man, when asked how rich he was would say: "I have 100 cows, 50 goats, 100 sheep, 10 children (males) and so many wives."

Also in the community, the women were considered to have little faith and to be feeble human beings. The dowry paid for the wives also made the women servants so that they laboured in a manner similar to that of bought slaves.

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS

The North Western diocese exists for the Christians of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, one part of all the Lutherans in the world. Undoubtedly, each diocese of the Lutherans differs in its application of the church doctrine, according to its environment. Our diocese is no different in this respect. Each section emphasizes certain different aspects of the discipline. Also Lutherans are part of a larger group of Christians, followers of Christ who believe in baptism and everlasting life. Christians are limbs of Christ who lives in the world through his church. He is here "Today, tomorrow and forever."

God created "a person" as the divine image. Therefore before God, children, the young, and the old are all "God's children". There is no man or woman. In the eyes of Christ all are equal - there are no differences.

Differences appear only in the eyes of people because of structural differences among them. But the functions of these different structures is co-operative for the safety and service of all in the community. It is not that a certain sex or age group is brighter or has more rights than the other. We, as Christians, should lead in spreading this word about equality and ensuring its practice. - BUT -

When Christianity came to Bukoba and Karagwe, it came to people who had their own traditions and habits relating to their everyday life.

These were the "gentiles" who joined Christianity. It was not the whole part of the body that became Christian since a certain part still enslaved itself and adhered to traditions (both good and bad). It was difficult for the few who joined Christianity to forget their traditions since they were a part of a larger group, (clan) joined together like rings of a chain. In other words, Christianity was laid side by side with traditions.

Although the church disliked some of the traditional practices because they were against Christian principles, (which usually defend the rights of all,) it could not change or do away with all traditional practices. They were afraid to create unnecessary opposition to the spread of Christianity. The church had to move slowly. It did, however, intervene and do away with some of our traditions - e.g. native songs and drums were forbidden within the church (missionaries). This happened not only in this diocese but in many other dioceses and churches in Tanzania.

On the other hand, the new Christians were satisfied with things as they were traditionally. There was no real big fight. Had this been the case, Christianity could have uprooted traditional beliefs and could have clearly pointed out those traditional practices that were anti-Christian. Although this was done, it was not efficiently or sufficiently done. It could not be done efficiently or sufficiently because the missionaries did not really understand the traditions of the people. Nor did they take time or have the interest to study them.

Out of this confusion evolved two different groups of Christians :

- a) those who called themselves "saved" (abalokoke) and claimed that most of the traditional beliefs and practices were "sin" and
 - b) those who were called "ordinary christians" and left only the traditional beliefs that were directly against Christianity.
- The majority attached themselves to this group.

It is thus clear that traditional beliefs and habits influenced the lives of the Christians of Buhaya and Karagwe. The women and the youth stayed in their respective places and were denied some of their rights until recently when the government and the church became conscious of human rights issues.

What can be called conservatism still exists among the leaders of our diocese, most of whom are males. These, in answering the questionnaire, say that "it is true that if a youth or a woman has the ability, he/she should be given a chance to serve". However, in spite of that statement, it is not practised. Some of the reason for not practising it have been mentioned in part I, one of them being the lack of education and skill, especially in the case of women.

However, some youth and women have required skills and could serve if given the chance. Some have been heard asking to be considered for service; but, almost invariably, only those who already have good opportunities are selected. These get the chance to further expand their knowledge. (This in itself is not bad but those others shouldn't be left behind.) Furthermore, some of those given chances have no connection with the church (which is good if it serves to attract them to the church, but it is discouraging for those connected with the church.)

Today the ideas of the leaders are very much influenced and controlled by traditional practices and habits: "Because our ancestors did such and such, we cannot make changes right now. We will go slowly." Also some of the leaders' ideas are misled by Bible misinterpretation. Paul's statements concerning women are used by many as an argument against women's service in the church. They forget that Paul contradicts himself on some occasions : In Cor. 14:34 he forbids them to take a leading part in public but in Gal. 3:28 teaches that in Christ distinction based on sex is abolished.

Also: Paul lived in the 1st century and in another nation. It is difficult to understand why the diocese emphasizes Paul's words and regards them as being indispensable, when Paul said these words to build and strengthen the church of that particular time. As the church should selectively keep and uphold those of our traditions which are good and

applicable today, so should it selectively keep and uphold Paul's words, and other Bible verses. It should also apply them constructively to our times and tribes. We do not live in Jewish land or in Paul's time.

As regards the woman, we have seen the kind of problems she faces in trying to raise her status. Tradition denies her some rights; in the church she is similarly treated and in the nation her educational level leaves her unwanted for jobs. She remains a pathetic figure to be pitied. Her low educational level hinders her being given any responsibility as a leader, and since all household matters are left to her, her chances of succeeding as a leader are reduced to nothing. What she needs is education and orientation in various matters. She needs to build up her interests and abilities. She needs time to read newspapers, magazines and books and to discuss what she reads and hears on radio with someone. In general she needs to be built up in fundamental, objective and constructive reasoning. (This is impossible if the only place she is allowed is the kitchen.) In addition to that, she needs to learn to think and speak as a person and not as a woman. This will help her deal with the life of struggling for human rights. She needs to learn that there are more important things than looking beautiful, fighting for men at dances and being jealous of other women. Some of the answers to the questionnaire discuss the election of women leaders in meetings. They indicate that women do not vote for other women because they look down on one another, have no confidence in one another and are jealous of each other. Some women who are elected have no confidence in themselves either, and are afraid of success, (afraid to lose their femininity and thus their attraction to men).

The woman needs assistance in her growth. The church should take on the responsibility of helping raise the women in every possible way. The woman should also be responsible and apply herself to the task of self emancipation.

To a certain extent the government did not include the woman in its plan for development. When education was started, many more schools were built for males. Very few, if any were built for females. Therefore, very few females got elementary education. This was in line with the traditional belief that the woman's place is at home and that her most important function is to bear children. To educate a female would therefore have been a waste of money. To educate a male, on the other hand, was profitable since he would go out and earn money for the whole family.

Till now the place of the woman in the community is still low. More is said than is done about raising her place. "Who will take up any responsibility when there are only very few women now who are getting higher education?" It is said that although there have been numerous discussions, this problem has not really been solved. There is some hope though, since most secondary schools are now co-educational. It is also the intention of the government to create more chances for women in high schools and universities.

Today life in the church is according to biblical and theological principles. Biblically and theologically, a woman is as much a Christian as

a man is. They both deserve everlasting life through grace. All human beings are equal in the eyes of God. (Gal. 3:27, Matt. 28:19-20, Matt. 11:28.)

The church today is very much under traditional beliefs, biblical principles and theology. Constitutionally equal rights exist for men and women, except :

- a) The woman is not allowed to conduct worship services . The woman is oppressed - she is not allowed to preach in church or read the Gospel there.
- b) Till now the synodal council which governs the diocese has 15 members of whom only one is a woman. This is not because of lack of capable women - there are many who could do the job.

It is also true that in most of the other committees in the diocese, there are fewer women than men.

It has been argued that the proportion of men to women on these committees is reasonable and proportional to the number of educated women available. This is true, but the question is: "How is the church helping to provide more women with education and to raise their status?"

There are many women who would like to be employed as parish sisters or in some similar capacity, but up to now we only have three native parish sisters who are unmarried. Those who are married do not find employment - why is this? We also have some foreign parish sisters.

It is surprising that the native parish sisters face a lot of problems in their work. Transportation is a problem, their pay is low, some of their houses are a sorry sight. Couldn't this discourage them from service?

In general, the woman in this diocese is regarded as being there only to serve in her own congregation and to help cook at church festivals. There are also a few female typists - very few indeed.

When we compare the number of women serving in our Lutheran diocese to those in service in other churches, we do not find much difference. The only difference is in the Catholic church where there are more women. These are nuns who have a different and special place as women.

Where to make changes and how to go about to effecting them

It has already been mentioned that the church found it difficult to make sudden changes for fear of shying away the would-be-Christians. That was a long time ago. The facts have been mentioned which could influence even the church to segregate women and youth in its service, and the service of the whole human being.

Changes are therefore needed in different fields in order to enable the church to react in the right direction. The church consists of Christians who form a society which is controlled by cultural, political and social aspects. Changes must therefore be made and effected in those fields also.

Culture

Traditionally, we have seen that women had many prohibitions, most of which were quite unfair. These prohibitions do not fit into this current society. People are all learned now and can understand what a mistake it was to make all those prohibitions for women. They see the disadvantages of these on women.

Therefore, these should be done away with. Some of them have already disappeared, but some still go on - and this is due to the fact that some of the older generation do not want or find it hard to stop these things. And surprisingly enough, some young people want to cling to these discriminating traditions.

It was believed that women were not as clever, intelligent and wise as men were. Young people were considered to be 'immature' and 'unable'.

It is clear that this was and is not true. Therefore, there is need of a complete revolution in the thinking patterns of people. They must accept facts as they are and not use these facts wrongly to oppress others. All deserve respect as human beings: differences in IQ appear in all - regardless of sex or age group.

Bride Price

Traditionally, this was stressed upon. It was a ground for respect in the new marriage. But only the groom's side had to pay lots of money, cows or goats and sheep. This meant that some people had to sell most of their possessions in order to get the wife they wanted. Later, when the couple was married, poverty problems would arise and thus many misunderstandings in the family.

What should be done then? Payment for brides should be abolished, and instead the families concerned should give each other what they regard as a token of thanks. It should not be a must, and neither should this be a hinderance for a happy marriage. The church should intervene in this issue, knowing very well that this clearly defies the equality of men according to the Bible. The government has already intervened in this, but it is still an issue on which people hesitate to give their final stand. It is one of those deep-rooted traditions which will take time to uproot.

There are many individual people - most of them Christians - who give away their daughters without demanding any payment for the bride. They are a good example to the understanding, but also a puzzle to the conservative.

The Congo is one African country which has been a good example in abolishing the tradition of payment for a bride and insisting on monogamous marriages. This has been done in order to satisfy the need for equality between mankind.

Marriage

We have seen how polygamous marriages added to the indignification of women in different ways. We suggest, therefore, that marriages be based on love.

The system of women 'moving' to their husbands homes should stop. Instead, both husband and wife should leave their family home, otherwise, if this cannot be done, men ought to realize that having women in 'their' homes does not make them masters and owners of both homes and wives.

The church has not shown its stand on the new marriage law - on the paragraph which states that people above 18 years may live together for two years and separate if they wish without claiming their partner as husband / wife.

Where does Christianity come in as far as polygamy is concerned? How does the church help the unmarried woman to remain stable?

God created man and woman in order that they should help each other in everything. The Bible is the best teacher as far as equality is concerned. Therefore, all the above-mentioned points have no biblical round, nor are they made with pure conscience.

Economic aspects

It is both man and woman who help to raise the standard of economy in the family, but often it is the man who profits by the economy.

For example : The family helps to pick, dry and sell coffee, (mostly women and children do the packing). When the coffee has been sold, many women are never told how much was received for it. Those who are told will never know how the money has been used. All they get is a pair of Khanga* or a dress or 1/16 of the money as theirs. The rest belongs to and is controlled by the man. If a family is a proper family then the standard of economy should be beneficial to all. The wife should also take part in the matter. Women who demand and demand regardless of the family's economy should be taught about budgeting. All kinds of mass media should be used in this country and within the church to educate and teach people about economy, income and expenditure. This being done but direct success has not been seen. Seminars should be held at different levels. Guidance and help should be given. Efforts should be made to ensure the practice of budgeting among all people. This will save a lot of marriages, time and waste of money.

The Church

Leadership

The church should help and encourage young people and women towards leadership. It should prepare them for different tasks. This should be done with all people, taking into account their religious background and faith, ability and talents.

Concerning female pastors, more than half of the research participants find no reason why women should not be pastors. Some women would prefer women pastors because they would feel free to express themselves.

Some say that though they have nothing against female pastors, ordination should be introduced cautiously. Some say clearly that it is an unheard of issue because Jesus had not female apostles. Also, traditionally women were no leaders in this part of the country.

* Length of cotton material which is wrapped round the body to make a dress

Church leaders should look into this matter objectively and take the necessary steps according to the wish of the majority, the light of the Gospel and the environment.

The terms of service or working conditions for female employees should be amended, so as to give them rights equal to those of men. Some of these regulations are not written anywhere but the church leaders and Christians always make female workers feel like 'caged' animals. Their steps in their lives are watched.

B e t a n i a

(Christian Women's Association in the Diocese)

This women's association needs to be strengthened. They need support and guidance. The church leaders should encourage this association. Women should be helped to learn perseverance in times of difficulty and when they are faced with obstacles.

Both women and youth should join different development schemes which must be arranged by the church. They should be helped to find their own identity.

Individual People

Women should stop feeling inferior to men. They should stop regarding themselves as a weaker sex. They should take a stand for themselves as human beings. They should believe in themselves. They should know that they are worthy as individuals and not as some people's wives.

They should encourage each other to find and fight for their identity. This should be done by all means through U W T - the national women's association and the church women associations.

Committee for the Participation of
Women and Youth in the Total Witness
and Service of the Church

ELCT -North Western Diocese

Judes Kamala
Samson B. Mushemba

Asia

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK) started its work in Hong Kong 27 years ago. The Women's Association of the ELCHK was organized in 1961. Women's work takes the form of a voluntary association within the church, with most of the leading women in the organization having full-time professions. They are teachers, librarians, school principals, nurses and education officers. They offer a great deal of their free time to organize group activities in the church, plan educational and training programmes, evangelistic meetings and retreats for women. Members of the organization have also taken active parts as executive committee members of the local Christian Council, World Day of Prayer, Asian Church Women's Conference (ACWC) and LWF Women's Advisory Committee as individuals or organization representatives. Financial contributions are made not only to our own church but also to mission work abroad and towards world problems of poverty and hunger.

The women among the four Lutheran synods - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong, Tsung Tsin Mission, Chinese Rhenish Church and Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod formed the Hong Kong Lutheran Women Fellowship Association in November 1975. This is a good example of the co-operative work among Lutherans here.

On the surface men and women appear to have an equal chance of receiving education in Hong Kong. Yet the education system here requires sacrifices and women are usually the ones who would lose the chance because of Chinese tradition. This shows itself in the women's work in the church. A lot of those who have the benefit of receiving education have full-time professions and it is difficult for them to spare a lot of time towards the work in the church in addition to family and professional responsibilities. On the other hand women who have received education, but who have been homemakers because of young children in the family, and those who have not received higher education, tend to be uncertain of their

ability to lead. The task of women's work in the church should be to help these people through leadership development to be aware of their potential and ability and to be active in church work.

There are women who take highly responsible positions in the church (such as presiding over the deacon's board), in the congregation and in the women's work. However, the language barrier often prevents them from experiences and information with women from other countries. Although there are many opportunities for women to exchange experiences there are as yet not enough women with the necessary language ability.

Hong Kong is a densely populated city. People seem to be interested only in making money and in themselves. There is a lack of sharing and of compassion. Christians should be able to change people's way of life and sense of values, and women can be very influential in developing this in their families, among their neighbours and in their professions.

The task which the women in the ELCHK and in the Lutheran Women's Fellowship Association have set themselves is to coordinate all the women's fellowships both at congregation and synod level. These two organizations aim to promote women's work, to plan programmes in order to educate women to be better stewards and to help in the growth of the church. We believe that women and men should share the responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel and that women as mothers have an important role to play in setting a living example for their children.

Lily Hsu

Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church, India

The women of India have just entered a kind of renaissance. Through the socialist pattern of society they are trying to center their lives less around their own homes and rather help spread the Gospel. The life of women in the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church is interesting. A good number of students of different faiths and religions are going out through Christian institutions which serve as Gospel centres.

The work among women in this area was started long ago. It is progressing in two ways, and both play equally important roles. The first one is work on a voluntary basis and the second consists of employment by the church. So, whether working voluntarily or on a salary basis, all women's work is carried out harmoniously under the leadership of a chairperson. Much work is being done by teachers, lecturers and doctors in their spare time. The whole work is tabulated and divided into two main branches. One is called Streela Samajams which is largely carried out by the voluntary workers. Then there is the 'Zanana' work mainly done by those earning a salary, but both types of work go hand in hand. All the work done by women is carried out under the auspices of the church. It is organized on local, regional, and even on national and international levels.

Problems in Society

I have experienced that many men still criticise the women when they go out to do the social and Gospel work and as a result many women hesitate to work outside their home.

The problem of the dowry system (the purchase of the bride-groom) is prevalent in South India and is a curse of society.

Illiteracy and insanitary living conditions.

Much of the caste system and un-touchability still prevail in all the villages; here Christians are looked down upon and ignored.

The government is making provisions only for Harijans i.e. for non-Christians. Therefore many people are not accepting Christianity lest they should lose government benefits. So this is the best time for the church to wake up, go into the villages and bring financial help and education to the villagers. Unless work is concentrated in the villages themselves, the villagers will never develop. I am glad I am working among the poor and illiterates.

Problems in the Church

Although it is established the church does not accept women pastors; for me this is the most burning problem at present.

The Goals

The women of the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church have taken a keen interest in supporting the paid women Gospel workers in the following ways :

1. To support the N.M.S. field workers in spreading the Gospel in central India
2. To open adult education centres.

The Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church Women's work is divided into five synods with synodical presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries and treasurers. These office bearers visit all the villages with the help of the church employee and that of the pastor's wife. Here in the villages they learn about the stories of Christ, commandments, Bible verses, and a few songs. They also learn about home maintenance. The same is done by the Bible women who go from door to door preaching the Gospel.

Once a year there is a general gathering but not so far in the villages. The women are doing good work these days, and they do it as well as the present pastors. They are able to organize Gospel campaigns and obtain very good results.

Lastly, the women can teach about Jesus and His work with women, the type of people He met; they can also teach about sanitation, how to read and write, about tolerance, and about child care and the needs of children.

K. Daisy Rajeswari

Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church, India

The 'Gossner Kalisiya Mahila Sangh', the women's work of GELCI is formally organized on the local, district, regional and national level and is a voluntary association within the church. The leaders of the women's activities work on a full-time, part-time and voluntary basis.

The problems women have in our society are illiteracy and lack of education in general, and ignorance and superstition therefore still prevail. Women have no skills with which to earn money and to raise their standard of living. There is also a lack of employment for those who are looking for jobs. Women suffer from social and economic injustices, and especially those from underprivileged sectors lack equal opportunities.

The living conditions of women are impaired by the lack of sanitation and lack of general health care service. There is a need for pre-and post-natal services.

In the church one of the main problems is the lack of leadership among women. On the one hand pastors are not interested enough in women's work, and on the other, the women themselves are not interested in the women's organization or its activities.

Equal opportunities for women in the church administration and ministry are lacking. The church does not make provision for proper planning, encouragement or support of women ministry.

Our church women's organization has set goals for its work such as Christian nurture for the families, the women and girls, to enable women to live a Christian life, to assist in mission work and financial support to institutions and mission and ecumenical cooperation.

The organized activities of the women in our church consist of monthly prayer meetings, Bible studies at the local and regional level, annual refresher courses for women church workers and volunteers at all levels, and collection of money for financial support of the church. There are also charity sales and other fund raising activities for mission work, and for support to the Bible society and other institutions.

On the national level our women's organization has contacts with the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of India, with the National Council of Churches in India, and on the international level we have contact with the Christian Conference of Asia, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Furthermore, we have contacts with Vikas Maitri, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Bible Society and with the International Women's Year Committee.

As far as the proclamation of the Gospel is concerned, women should share equal responsibility for this with men both inside and outside the church. In other words - women should have an active role in proclaiming the Gospel in the parish and mission fields.

Women/ mothers have a greater contribution to make towards human development than men as they can help the child grow and develop into a sound human being. The mother can make a valuable contribution towards the best kind of human personality from the beginning of pregnancy until the child reaches its teens.

Paracleta Minz

India Evangelical Lutheran Church

Work among the women in our church dates back even as far as time of the missionaries. The wives of the missionaries started working among the women, teaching them various activities such as sewing, knitting, house keeping etc. Later the women of the local congregations organized themselves and some educated women came forward to help them. Later on, (some 25 years ago) organization took place on a larger scale, on circle and synod levels. It was only recently that women representatives of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) met in Nagercoil and formed a central organization for the whole of the IELC with a definite constitution and a working board. The name we have selected for this women's organization is "INDIA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN". This organization has a promoter, a president and a secretary. It is closely associated with our church, and our president takes a keen interest in the good working of the organization. The church also subsidises the expenses of this work. Women representatives are invited to attend the church conventions and express their ideas. The organization is, however, an autonomous entity. So far we have no full-time workers though we are trying to have one or two officers who will work full time. One of the women missionaries is asked to serve as the promoter in spite of her other assignments. This central organization is there only to help the local and regional organizations.

Our society is faced with many problems. Of these the following are important : unemployment, low wages, little equality with men, illiteracy, large families, shyness. Along with these social problems the church faces certain other problems such as poor attendance, poor giving, disinterest in church activities, non-participation and lack of cooperation with women volunteer workers.

Since our women's organization was formed with ecclesiastical and social aims, we are trying to eradicate some of the problems that we find both

in our society and church. We have set as our goal to help the women of our church and society to be educated in family planning, to help them to learn some skill to augment their income, to help them in health education and to keep their children and houses clean, to help young girls to gain technical certificates so as to help the family with their earnings. In the church : to help them to be more interested in church activities, in prayer and worship, to increase their giving to God through stewardship training.

With these goals in mind we have started various vocational training centres such as tailoring institutes and handicraft centres. In some places they are well organized and these centres are affiliated to the government which even gives some financial aid. Only lack of funds hinders us from carrying out greater efforts which would help rural and urban women. Most of the women belong to the rural areas. Since our part of the country is in the monsoon area and we get only seasonal rains, these women are all agricultural labourers and do not have regular work in all seasons. If these women are taught some suitable trade they can make good use of their leisure time. Our church is trying to get financial help from the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches to start various trade centres.

Our contacts with other similar women's organizations both inside and outside India are very limited so far. We have sent representatives to some national women's conferences but not as official delegates. Only now has one of our officers been sent to the States to receive some training and to contact American Women's Societies. We have a limited relationship with the women's organizations of other churches in India.

On the local level we have been inviting women from other denominations as guest speakers, and our women take part in the meetings of other denominations. Once a year our women join with the other women in the Women's World Day of Prayer.

In the East there is a notion that women should be silent. This is very true to the biblical teaching. But proclamation of the Gospel is not merely preaching in the church, or in public. The women could undertake various kinds of service in society which would really proclaim the Gospel. Visiting the sick, helping the poor to improve their standard of living, distributing tracts, taking an active part in congregational activities such as Sunday School, vacation Bible School, youth meetings etc., using all kinds of talents to glorify the name of our Lord Jesus.

If women organize themselves they can contribute much towards human development. There are very many openings for women to be of service: locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Women can help in the rural areas to eradicate illiteracy among people, especially among women and children. They could also participate in the national health programme such as in family planning and nutrition. Women's organizations can educate poor women to use these programmes and benefit from them. They could help the rural children to reap the benefits of the national educational programmes and could also help in the modern methods of

agriculture. Women can help the people of urban areas to get jobs in factories and business and to see that labourers have legal advice if necessary. Even well educated people in urban areas need help in house keeping, educating the children, marriage, family life etc..In all these things women could help.

In short, these are many avenues through which women can exert themselves in the area of human development.

Beulah Norbert

Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, India

Though the foundation of a women's organization in our church was a long felt need, it only really began with the first Conference of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church Women in October 1959 in Tiruchirappalli. In the business session of the Conference, a CONSTITUTION was drafted and submitted to the Church Council for approval and action. This was revised and approved by the Church Council on January 1st, 1961, and with this the women's organization of our church officially came into existence. (A copy of constitution is attached herewith.)

Name of our Women's Organization

The women's organization thus started in the congregations of our church was named TELC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP, thereby making membership open not only to 'mothers' but to all women - married and unmarried, old and young, literate and illiterate.

Women's Fellowship as part of church structure

The Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church has built up its congregational work in four sections :

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. work among children | - Sunday School |
| 2. work among youth | - Youth Movement - C.I.I. |
| 3. work among women | - Women's Fellowship |
| 4. work among men | - Men's Fellowship (being organized) |

Thus the TELC Women's Fellowship is part of the church structure, with two full-time secretaries working in the TELC Women's Centre, Mayuram, which is a training centre as well as retreat centre for our women. The appointment of staff and financial transactions are made through the church council. Furthermore, all new projects in its programme of work

are first approved by the church council for future support and guidance.

Women's fellowship - on local and regional level

Local level

The women's fellowships, which number 80 at present, are organized in the town and village congregations of our church. Each local women's fellowship functions under the Local Executive Committee with the pastor loci as president and four women as chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer elected every year from among the members. This committee plans the fundraising programmes of local women's fellowship groups in consultation with the Pastorate Committee. As the pastor is the president of this committee as well as of the Pastorate Committee, there is usually good cooperation in the planning and executing the programmes of local women's fellowship groups.

Regional level

The 70 pastorates of our church are divided into 10 districts. The women's fellowship groups in these districts are under the direct supervision and guidance of seven honorary district secretaries, who in turn cooperate with the district committee of the church.

Leadership of women's work

1. Central Council

The TELC Women's Fellowship is governed by a Central Council of nine members :

President	- The Bishop of Tanquebar
Chairperson	- A woman nominated by the Church Council
General Secretary	- Appointed by the Church Council
Members	- Seven members are nominated by the outgoing Central Council, subject to the approval of the C.C.
Treasurer	- To be elected by the Central Council from among the members and approved by the C.C.

Period of office : three years (Triennium to Triennium). The Central Council shall meet at least twice a year.

Quorum : 50 % of the members

2. Full-time staff

The general secretary, an assistant secretary and a typist are appointed by the Church Council to plan and execute the programme of work of the TELC Women's Fellowship and TELC Women's Centre. The headquarters of the TELC women's work is in Mayuram.

3. Honorary District Secretaries

Seven district secretaries are appointed by the W.F. Central Council to do honorary part-time work in the districts by visiting W.F. groups

and helping them to carry out the programme for each year.

4. Parish Helpers

The parish helpers, who are trained in the TELC Women's Centre and work in village congregations of the TELC, help the W.F. groups in villages.

Special areas of concern and problems of women

In Society

1. Illiteracy

Though women are 50% of India's population, only 18% of them are literate. In rural areas only 9% of women are literate. Due to this large percentage of illiteracy, most of the women still live in darkness and much of their potential for welfare of the society in which they live is not used.

2. Population explosion

In addition to the present population 570 million, India faces a rapid increase of population every year. During the decade 1961/1971 the population growth rate was 24.8%. The net addition to the population in the same decade was 108 million - the highest experienced in any decade so far. Family planning as a measure against population explosion is to be introduced.

3. Poverty

The population growth rate is 2.4% whereas the per capita income increase is only 2%. As a result many suffer poverty and 40% of people live below the poverty line, struggling to get even one meal a day.

4. Social injustice

Even in this twentieth century, women have to fight against some social injustice in marriage practices, such as dowry, castism, arranged marriages etc.

In church

Much of the potential and special talents of women are not recognized nor used by the church. Women are not given :

- representation in the decision-making committees of the church
- participation in the Divine Service (Scripture reading, praying, etc)
- opportunities to practise Christian stewardship

Goals of our women's work

According to our Constitution, our goal is to serve the church, to witness for Jesus Christ and work for the Kingdom of God to be established. For this each women's fellowship pledges :

- to work primarily amongst the women of our congregations and to unite them in the service of the church
- to strengthen spiritual life in the homes
- to unite in the Bible study and prayer
- to witness for Christ in life
- to help the N.M.S. work
- to support the Deaconess work
- to help the Bible Society

In the past few years much stress has been laid on realizing this goal through outreach programmes in society.

Organized and unorganized activities of women in our church

The activities of women's fellowships are twofold :

1. To help the women to grow in faith

- Bible studies, retreats, conferences, seminars, prayer cells, World Day of Prayer, Least Coin Fellowship are organized locally.
- Besides this the TELC Women's Centre in Mayuram arranges for periodical retreats, courses and seminars for mothers, W.F. leaders, unmarried workers, parish helpers and young girls.

2. To help the women to serve

- To enable many women to participate in the W.F. activities according to their time and talents, each W.F. group is encouraged to function in four circles.
- Marthal Circle - collection of handful of rice; feeding the poor; helping in the fund-raising activities of the church by tea stalls
- Dorkal Circle - collection and mending of old cloths for distribution to the poor; making and mending altar cloth; sewing and handwork for sales; caring for church utensils and decorating altar
- Priscilla Circle - Teaching in Sunday School and Vocation Bible School, conducting Bible study for young girls; conducting adult literacy classes for village women; doing evangelistic work; distributing tracts and gospels
- Monica Circle - Prayer cells to bring all matters of families, congregation and country before the throne of Grace; visiting the sick in home and hospitals and prisoners in jail; comforting the bereaved.
- Besides these activities in general, the following are planned as special projects for the women's fellowships in 1976 :
- Indian Fostership scheme - contributing Rs. 45.-- per child per month to support poor children in their education.

- Adult literacy class in a nearby slum or village - helping the illiterate village women to help themselves towards a better way of living.
- Marriage bureau - encouraging Christian families in intercaste marriage, thus combatting the evils of casteism.
- Creche with KNH (Kindernothilfe) support wherever possible - helping mothers as well as children in slum areas.

National, International and Ecumenical Contacts

National

The TELC Women's Fellowship has membership in :

- All India Council of Christian Women
- United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India - Women's work

International

- World Day of Prayer
- Least Coin Fellowship
- Lutheran World Federation - Women's work and Scholarship Programme

The role of women with regard to proclamation of the Gospel

" GO AND TELL" - the first missionary command of the risen Lord was given to Mary Magdalene - a WOMAN - Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, by making a woman the first missionary to proclaim the good news of His resurrection has revealed that HE HAS GIVEN TO WOMEN AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL. So the role of women with regard to proclamation of the Gospel is in no way less than that of men. Hence the women, besides proclaiming the Gospel in their capacities as wives, mothers in home and workers in church and society, have also the right and privilege to proclaim the Gospel as ordained ministers of the church.

Women's contribution towards human development

According to the creation story in Genesis, women share equally with men in God's plan for humanity, which means a full, rich, free and meaningful life for the soul and body of all people. If our women realize their great responsibility in human development, they can contribute a lot by their life and service, in home, society and church.

Home

- exercising responsible parenthood (planned family)
- bringing up of children in a healthy environment
- ensuring a balanced diet and healthy food habits in the family
- Christian nurture in character and building
- planned education and training for children
- providing opportunities for developing the special talents of children

- participating as families in social service programme
- caring for the sanitation and cleanliness of surroundings

Society

Women as individuals or as a women's organization can take part in all the programmes, which aim at human development by fighting against the evils of :

- poverty
- illiteracy
- population explosion
- starvation and malnutrition
- exploitation of women
- social injustice of women, etc.

Church

"Caring for the whole human being" - with this as our goal the following can be planned and organized by the church with the assistance of the women :

- counselling centres
- community centres
- vocational guidance centres
- health centres in villages
- adult literacy classes in villages
- creche centres in villages or slum areas

CONCLUSION

One of our pastors has recently described the Women's Fellowship as the powerhouse of his congregation. This is what we aim at - to be the powerhouse of our church, home and society. When our women are recognized as "valuable human material to be brought to full flower and full participation in life and events" -, our Women's Fellowship will surely prove to be a POWERHOUSE to our CHURCH and NATION.

Siron Athisayam

C O N S T I T U T I O N

TELC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

(as revised in the C.C. meeting dated Jan. 17th, 1961 and amended in the C.C. meetings dated Febt. 20/21st, 1967 and Oct. 10/11th, 1968)

I. NAME

of the Association shall be the TELC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

II. OBJECT

The Fellowship will be associated with the activities of the church. It is called to serve the church, to witness for Jesus Christ and to work for the Kingdom of God to be established. The Fellowship will pledge :

- to work primarily amongst the women of our congregations and to unite them in the service of the church
- to strengthen the spiritual life in the homes
- to unite in the Bible study and prayer
- to witness for Christ in life
- to help the National Missionary Society's work
- to support the deaconess work
- to help the Bible Society

III. MEMBERSHIP

1. All communicant members of the TELC are eligible for full membership in the local associations. They shall pay a membership fee according to the rate fixed by the local associations. Where C.I.I. (youth movement) is functioning for both sexes all students in universities, college, hospital, training institutions and schools, regardless of their age, shall not be members of the Women's Fellowship, but members of the C.I.I.. The others are free to join whichever organization they like, either Women's Fellowship or C.I.I..
2. Sustaining membership :
Those who are members of the C.I.I. wishing to co-operate with the activities of the Fellowship are welcome to do so as sustaining members. They cannot be office bearers in the local committees.
3. Women, who are not members of the TELC, but in sympathy with the aims of the fellowship and wish to join it, may be permitted by an action of the local fellowship. They may pay the usual subscription, participate in the activities and attend the meetings with the right of floor only.

IV. CENTRAL COUNCIL

There shall be a Central Council of 9 members

- President : - the Bishop of Tranquebar
- Chairperson - a woman shall be nominated by the C.C.
- General Secretary : - to be appointed by the C.C.
- Members : - seven members shall be nominated by the outgoing Central Council subject to the approval of the C.C.
- Treasurer : - to be elected by the Central Council from among the members and approved by the C.C.
- Period of Office : - three years. Triennium to Triennium. The Central Council shall meet at least twice in a year
- Quorum : - 50% of the members

V. FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

1. To guide and direct the work of the General Secretary
2. To prepare the annual budget for the sanction of the Church Council and raise funds required for the association and to administer the sanctioned budget.
3. To draw up and implement an effective programme of work.

VI. HONORARY DISTRICT SECRETARIES

The Central Council may appoint honorary secretaries for the District within its resources.

VII. LOCAL ASSOCIATION

1. The committee in charge of Local Association shall ordinarily consist of the following : Pastor Locī shall be the President. Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected EVERY YEAR from among the members. Additional members can be co-opted if needed.
2. All local associations shall seek affiliation with the Women's Fellowship through the President-Pastor-Locī, Pastorate Committee and General Secretary.
3. All affiliated associations shall be under the Women's Fellowship Central Council.

PLAN OF WORK FOR 1976

TELC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

I. Projects for WF groups in general

1. Indian Fostership scheme

Expansion of Indian Fostership scheme to children, who do not receive KNH support. It was decided :

- to accept the TELC Home for children in Anaikadu with 60 children as the home to be supported by the TELC women's fellowships
- to request each women's fellowship group to accept one child from the above home as their foster-child and support the child by sending Rs. 45.-- per month by collection or donation

2. Religious book depot

It was decided to encourage WF groups in towns and cities to start a religious book depot investing a part of their WF fund in this project.

3. Adult literacy classes

It was decided to encourage each WF group to start adult literacy classes in a nearby village or slum area.

II. Special projects

1. Creche with KNH support

It was decided to start creche centres with KNH support in Madras - Ambaltur, Coimbatore, Mayuram and Virudhunagar.

2. Hostel for working women

It was decided to start hostels for working women which could be run by collecting establishment and food charges in Mayuram (Miriam Sisters Home) and Virudhunagar (TELC buildings)

3. Tailoring centres

It was decided to start tailoring centres, where unemployed women may be helped to help themselves in places like Virudhunagar, where buildings are available.

4. Marriage bureau

It was decided to start a TELC marriage bureau to help parents to find good Christian brides and bridegrooms for their children with

the following members :

Ms. J. Easter Raj	- chairperson
Ms. Padma Muthiah	- secretary
Ms. Syria Pushpam	- assist. secretary

5. Counselling centres

It was decided to recommend to the Church Council to start such centres for general and marriage counselling.

6. Home for fallen women

It was decided to :

- request the Manager, Dayalasthlam, Trichy, to reassign the home to the purpose for which it was started
- recommend to the Manager, Dayalasthlam, to take only such young women who have gone astray and deserted widows.

III. TELC Women's centre

It was decided to have the following courses and retreats in the women's centre :

- orientation course for unemployed graduates 10.3.76 - 9.4.76
- one year Bible course for chreche-trained girls - to be planned
- Bible women training for the women in widows' home in Karunagara-puri and Dayalasthlam, Trichy - to be planned
- the following retreats are planned :
 - for mothers - to deal with problems of broken homes, bringing up of teenagers, sex education, etc.
 - for W.F. leaders
 - for pastors' candidates wives
 - for Bible women and parish helpers

All the members and regional secretaries are requested to explore the possibilities for the different projects.

Church Rules - Revision - Suggestion called for - C.C. Circular no. 26/1974 - 77 - read

It was unanimously decided to recommend to the Church Council the following :

In all the decision-making bodies of the church like P.C., D.C., C.C., S.C.C., and Synod, women should be given representation by reservation.

The local association shall pay to the Central Council an annual contribution, which shall be fixed by the Central Council.

All fund-raising activities of the local Women's Fellowship shall be determined by the Women's Fellowship Committee in conference with the local Pastorate Committee.

The fund raised by the TELC Women's Fellowship may be deposited in the Post Office Savings Bank Account under the joint names of chairperson and treasurer.

Siron Athisayam

Batak Christian Community Church, Indonesia

The women of the Batak Christian Community Church (P.K.B.) are formally organized. The organization is called 'Perkumpulan Kaum IBU P.K.B.', and it is voluntarily associated with the church.

In Jakarta we have three P.K.B. churches and each church women's organization has its own leader who is also its representative on the national level. Leaders are elected every four years.

The special areas of concern and problems of women in our church are as follows :

The elite and educated women are not at all interested in joining the church women's organization and contributing their knowledge. There is a gap between the educated and uneducated women who have a feeling of inferiority.

Sometimes the elite and the educated women use the church organization for satisfying their own needs and striving for power and forget the real purpose of the organization as stated by the church.

The goals of work that women of our church have set themselves can be divided into two groups, the short-term and the long-term objectives. The short-term objectives which are already under way are :

- leadership training to provide capable leaders
- educating Sunday-school teachers
- Bible study
- training of women elders.

The short-term objectives which are still in the planning process are :

- training of women pastors
- training of women motivators such as: business women, agricultural consultants, technical consultants, home industry consultants, hygiene and birth control consultants
- vocational training to help women to raise their living standard by getting a job
- joining in the effort to transform society
- training women to study the law, in order to be aware of their rights.

The long-term objectives that are in the process of being organized are:

- participating in the country's development and efforts towards world peace
- participating in the current problems facing society: drug addiction, unemployment, urbanization, rural development, transmigration.

On the national level our women's organization participates in the activities of the Regional National Council. The President of our women's organization is also a member of the Working Women's Group of the N.C.C. and thus participates in its ecumenical activities such as :

- providing leadership training for church women in each region and rural areas of the whole archipelago of Indonesia
- joining ecumenical church women activities such as :
Asian Church Women's Conference (A.C.W.C.)
- joining the Christian Conference of Asia and participating in preparations for the Women's Forum of Asia that will take place in Manila next year.

We are conscious that the churches in this world are sent by God to be witnesses and to be servants in the world which is developing towards the unity of humankind.

The women too, are called to responsible participation in their effort to release the people from suffering, because of backwardness, poverty, illness, fear and uncertainty of the law.

Anita Frieda Tobing

Batak Protestant Christian Church, Indonesia

The women in our church were formally organized in the year 1954, its statute having been agreed upon by the Synod of the church. Prior to this each congregation had its own women's group but these groups were not united on one section.

Our women's organization is called the Women's Department of the Batak Protestant Christian Church (HKBP). This department is at present led by a director who is a bible woman, and the department is part of the church structure. The director is thus a staff member of the General Secretariat of the church. The department director has to form a Women's Central Council, composed of ten - twelve women from various districts of the church. The praeses as head of a district, the pastor as head of a ressort and the elders as heads of a congregation have to form a district ressort and congregation councils for women led by a woman who, if possible, should be a bible woman in that district, ressort or congregation. All activities undertaken by the Women's Central Council, district council, ressort council and congregation council should be agreed upon by the General Secretary, Praeses, pastors and elders respectively. The women are organized on the local, regional and national level. Bible women are engaged full time in work with and among women, whereas work done by lay-women is mostly voluntary. Women can be elected by the elders of the ressorts to be their delegates to the Synod.

The special areas of concern and problems of our women are :

1. In society

- a) needs in the family
- b) problems concerning the behaviour of children

2. In the church

- a) because of tradition men often obstruct women in coming forward or holding official positions in the church, such as being women delegates to the Synod or church elders, even though the Synod has decided that these positions in the church are open to women and the guidelines of the women's organization have been agreed upon by the church.
- b) The tendency of youth to avoid the church.

The aim of the women's work here is to help the church build a community in Christ, which means :

- a) to activate the spiritual life of women
- b) to create a church as a serving community
- c) to create partnership in the church between men and women
- d) to create a church carrying out its mission in both the spiritual and the physical sense.

The organized activities of women in our church are:

1. Local level

- a) weekly prayer meetings : Bible study, choir groups
- b) visits to the hospitals, orphanages, prisons
- c) to hold house group meetings

2. National level

- a) to organize conventions and seminars
- b) to arrange for Women's Sunday to be observed every year
- c) to participate in international programmes
- d) to arrange for refresher courses
- e) to collect finances towards a special purpose such as building of homes for women students.

Mathilde Marpaung

Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia

The Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia (GKPI) was established on August 30th, 1964. Immediately after it was founded the women in its local congregations began participating in various kinds of church activities such as fund raising, social activities and assisting local councils in other areas of church life. At the first General Synod of the GKPI in 1966 (at that time we held our General Synods every two years) the Women's section became officially recognized both on a local and regional level and at our national headquarters.

The name of our women's organization is "Seksi Wanita GKPI" (Women's Section of the Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia). All of the women in the church are automatically members of the Women's Section, even unmarried girls if they wish.

The Women's Section is part of the church structure. In the headquarters it is led by a president and a vice-president of the Women's Section, who are both appointed by the Executive Directors. The vice-president does the work of secretary and treasurer. These two leaders are assisted by three members of the Women's Section and also two advisors (the Bishop's wife and the General Secretary's wife in an ex-officio capacity.)

As mentioned above, we are organized on the local, regional and national level. All of the leaders of the Women's Section are voluntary workers.

Provision is made for women in our church and society

- Traditionally, in our society women are not expected and do not expect to take an active part in social life. There are many positions open to women in our society today, but because of traditional values (our adat) the majority of women are reluctant to accept them.
- This situation is also found in our church. Ample provision is made for women to hold positions of leadership, but women hesitate to accept

these positions (e.g. the position of elder could be filled by a woman but this job is thought to be too venerable for women).

The goals of the Women's Section in our church today are :

- The development of Women in general as responsible members of the church and society.
- Specifically in the home : to promote Christian nurture in the home, good moral standards, mental and physical health.
- In the church : active participation in decision-making and realization of church programmes.

There are some organized activities :

- Hari Kebangunan Wanita (Revival Day of Women)
A day when we reconsider our status, roles and aims and plan activities to meet those aims. All the women in our church are organized in each regional women's section to celebrate this day. The programmes are sent to them from Headquarters. In the programme we have a worship service (all the liturgy led by women), choirs, bazaars (the funds from the bazaars have been used for building houses for retired Bible women and are now being used to build a boarding house for students) and speeches especially on education, nutrition, the use of money and planned parenthood
- Prayer Day on the second Sunday of September.
On that Sunday we have a special service, at which we pray especially for the life and work of women in our church, in the church all over the world, in society and in the family life.
- From Headquarters there are regular visitations to important centres, where the women are keen to establish women's Bible study groups.
- Our Headquarters organize up-grading courses for women leaders in the eleven districts of the GKPI.
Our purpose is to bring the women to a greater understanding and awareness of their status and role and at the same time their responsibilities in church activities.
- Fund raising for Headquarters finances (collecting the least coins from the families).

Unorganized activities :

- As mentioned above
- fund raising for church building, pastor's houses, school buildings, the work of evangelization,
 - social activities such as care for distressed and miserable people and giving charity
 - choir practice
 - weekly Bible teaching
 - Prison and hospital visiting
(celebrating Christmas Eve, Easter and the Day of Pentecost in these places)

- women also assist in other areas of church life, i.e. collecting used clothing, used newspaper, bottles. assisting local councils with preparation for church festivities.

To date, our women's organization does not have much contact with other national organizations.

Contact at the international level is both personal and on a representative basis where representatives from our women's organization meet with representatives from other churches overseas, i.e. a Leadership Development Seminar for Women in Sukabumi, organized by the Women's Desk of the Lutheran World Federation and attended by women from all Lutheran churches in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Ecumenical contact : when special services are held in our church, members of the Catholic, HKBP and many other churches are invited to come. We are also invited to their special services.

To be frank, it is more difficult for women to go out to proclaim the Gospel than it is for men. In such circumstances women can support this work by contributing their ideas and money.

In addition to this, they can witness through their daily life, in their various activities. The way they behave and talk, particularly non-Christians, the way they carry out their jobs and through their faithfulness.

They can also witness in the home through bringing up the children with love and Christian education, so that the life of the family reflects the love of Christ. This, of course, will also penetrate the society and its environment. Many Christian families have non-Christian servants, drivers and gardeners. We should take this opportunity to show the love of Christ, to give them Christian books and to be fair in our treatment of them.

Some ways for women to contribute towards human development

- To give courses to women in subjects such as : education, economics, dairy farming, handicrafts and domestic science.
By feeding them with this knowledge they will be able to improve the methods of doing their work.
- To encourage women to send more daughters as well as sons to school.

Juliana T. Hutagalung-Hutabarat

Indonesian Christian Church

When the Huria Kristen Indonesia was founded in 1927, a women's choir grew up in every congregation. They practiced once or twice a week and every Sunday and at church celebrations they sang in the church. At that time they were organized only at the church level.

Many years after that the pastor of every ressort arranged a combined women's celebration for the women's choirs of each congregation in his ressort, which consists of five to ten congregations. Each ressort has a Women's Council.

In 1960 the Ressort Councils began to form a District Council, which at present consists of three to five ressorts. At present there are twelve Ressorts.

At that time the women's groups worked only in their own Ressorts. Consequently there was no communication among the groups in each Ressort, and this delayed the development of the women in our church. This was felt by the Central Council of the Huria Kristen Indonesia and therefore in 1968 all the women's groups were organized into one body, with a Central Council, called "PERSATUAN WANITA HURIA KRISTEN INDONESIA" (P.W.H.K.I.) and situated in Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra. This body comes under the Department of Education which is led by a male member of the Synod, and this is one of the Departments of the H.K.I..

Our present Chairperson is Ms. Saragih and I am Vice Chairperson from August 1974 until August 1978. All the Central Officers are voluntary and all are part-time workers, because the H.K.I. has not enough funds to pay full-time workers.

Once a year there is an upgrading course for women's leaders from the twelve districts of the H.K.I.. Last year it was held in August and some

items that were discussed during the course were :

1. How to educate children/young people against losing their moral standards.
2. How to develop family planning and family welfare.
3. How to encourage women to become more active in the church.
4. How to improve the standard of living.

This year the course will be held in September.

Every two years the women of the P.W.H.K.I. organize a Choir Festival in which the winners of each of the twelve districts participate. Some other activities of women in our church are as follows :

1. They assist in raising funds for the church celebrations during Easter, Christmas and other festivities.
2. They assist in the church development.
3. They assist the elders during prayer meetings in the villages.
4. They visit the sick/distressed members.
5. They perform Bible Studies.
6. They educate other women about their status in the church and in the country.

The special problem of women in our country are unemployment which leads to poverty; drug-addiction which kills or damages the young generation; air-pollution which leads to diseases; prostitution and corruption.

The special problems of women in our church are :

1. The traditional rules that limit the participation of women in certain activities of the church.
2. The lack of Bible-women to perform Bible-studies among women.
3. The young girls and boys are not willing to attend church to hear about the Gospel and are therefore not willing to take part in the church activities either, because they are more interested in the modern facilities now available.
4. The lack of funds to build more schools and health clinics in the rural areas.

The goals that women in our church have set for their work are as follows :

1. To do everything in our power to assist the church to have an open community.
2. To contribute towards human development.
3. To assist the H.K.I. in raising funds.

4. To educate other women in our church to proclaim the Gospel.
5. To improve the standard of living of our families.
6. To help each other in spiritual and social life.

In my opinion the role of women with regard to proclamation of the Gospel is as follows :

- a) Women should realize its importance and encourage other women to participate in the church activities.
- b) We should make other women realize that in the eyes of God, there is no difference between men and women in proclaiming the Gospel by learning and sharing the words of God to all people.
- c) We should go out to other people who are non-Christians and tell them about Jesus Christ the Saviour.

In view of the present situation of the H.K.I. it is my opinion that to develop the churches in general, and H.K.I. in particular, we have to bear two points of view in mind :

1. The mental point of view

- a) We must change the mental attitude in our social life by living as simple as possible.
- b) We must reduce the gap between the rich and the poor by giving an example in our daily life.
- c) We must build more schools and provide Christian education.

2. The physical point of view

- a) We must look for a way of employing people by setting up agriculture projects or other schemes.
- b) We must collect funds to help the poor by providing them with cheap housing.
- c) We must provide vocational training which will enable other women to earn their living.

I think these are the ways in which women could contribute towards human development.

Martha L. Sihombing-Simamora

At the inception of the Huria Kristen Indonesia in 1927 a women's choir at once arose in every congregation, singing at every Sunday service. This encouraged the members of the congregation, and because they had to sing, they were always present at the services. They helped the elders to collect funds and contributions.

Once a year, on Easter or Ascension Day, the Ressorst pastor holds a joint women's celebration for all the women's choirs of the congregations in that Ressorst. (One Ressorst has five to ten congregations.) They have Ressorst Councils.

In 1960 the Ressorst Councils began to form a District Council. One District consists of three to five Ressorsts.

In 1968 they were organized into one body with a central council, called "Persatuan Wanita Huria Kristen Indonesia" (PW-HKI) At present, the President is Ms. Saragih and Vice-President is Ms. Martha Simamora. The PW-HKI is under the Department of Education. The central officers all work voluntarily, and there is no full-time worker since HKI has not enough funds to pay one.

They organize a Choir Festival every two years, in which the bestchoirs from all the twelve districts participate.

The PW-HKI is a great help to the HKI in that it helps the elders in village prayer meetings, and all celebrations. Its members are the most loyal givers to the church.

The PW-HKI is represented in all women's ecumenical activities and celebrations, and sometimes also in national women's meetings abroad, through the LWF.

Last year the PW-HKI held an upgrading course for women's leaders, and a further one is planned to be held this year in September. At these courses matters are discussed such as the education of children against lowering of moral standards; how to further family planning and family welfare; how to prevent women from leaving their children at home while helping the husband to earn their living, as this would endanger the education of the children at home. A proper Christian education for the children will help the development of the people.

Official Report of the HKI

Simalungun Protestant Christian Church, Indonesia

Our church is organized on three levels, the church headquarters, the ressorts and the parishes. There are 33 ressorts which consist each of six to twelve parishes, in all 314 parishes. Church activities are carried out in six sections; the assignment of one of these is to work with and among women (Women Section of GKPS). Women's work is part of the church structure and is organized on the regional level. The leaders of women's work are part time.

In our society the women face special problems such as a lack of education, and economic difficulties. They also have little consciousness with regard to their situation as women. In general, women in the church have the same problems, and there is a lack of appreciation by men of women's potential.

The activities of the Women Section of GKPS are :

- to console suffering people
- to give presents to poor at Christmas
- to form a choir among women
- to meet once a week to discuss religion and topics of common interest
- to meet once a month in the parish, also to discuss religion and topics of interest and plan future activities
- to meet annually with the boards of Women Section from all ressorts, with two delegates from each ressort participating.

On the national level we join the Conference of Dewan Gereja Indonesia (DGI) and also participate in the upgrading course which is held by the Women's Section of DGI.

On the international level we have contacts with the Lutheran World Federation and took part in the consultation on Proclamation and Human Development in Nairobi, 1974. We read LWF women's publications and write news about our Women's Section's activities. We have regular correspondence with the Women's Desk of the Lutheran World Federation about our activities and the developments in our churches.

Women could contribute towards human development

- by giving their children and the children of others a good education
- by setting an example to the younger generation
- by giving regular Bible studies to both old and young people
- by supporting the poor.

Sophia Damanik

Lutheran Church in Korea

The Lutheran Women's Association in Korea (LWAK) was established on October 25th, 1969. In 1964 the first meeting was held informally at Immanuel Lutheran Church with 9 Korean women and three wives of Lutheran missionaries present. At that meeting the Lutheran Ladies Group was activated. In 1969 the first formal General Assembly was convened. The General Assembly is held once a year. The LWAK has 55 to 60 members from all the congregations of the Lutheran Church in Korea.

The organization is led by a chairperson, Ms. Hei Za Nam and a general secretary, Ms. Ye Kon Chang. There are five committees :

- Education Committee
- Mission Committee
- Service Committee
- Planning Committee
- Fellowship Committee

Each committee has its own director. All leadership is voluntary.

LWAK is not a part of the church structure, but has received help from the Christian Education Committee of the Lutheran Church in Korea. LWAK is voluntarily associated with the church; there are good co-operative relations between the LWAK and the Lutheran Church in Korea.

Special areas of concern and problems of women in our society

The LWAK is concerned with community welfare centered in local churches. Some examples are :

- Community children's library (because school children have really no place to study in their homes)

- Center for the aged (because the elderly in the community have a lot of free time)
- Family planning programme
- Family Counselling Center (for family welfare)
- Youth programme

The following are the problems :

- There is not sufficient opportunity for women to participate in various social activities in the country.
- Most Korean women depend very largely on their parents, husbands and their sons. So they cannot decide to separate from them either in spirit, emotion or economy.
- They do not know how to make use of their good ideas and potentiality, received from God. (E.g., most Korean women have very low self-image, no self-perception, and no women's dignity - less self-dignity than men.)
- It is important to realize how big the need is for women's humanization.

Special fields of concern and problems of women in our church

- Church development and mission to get many new Christians
- Service programme (for the improvement of communication)
- Education programme (for the better understanding of the function and role of women in the church)

Problems :

- There are no women specially assigned to do women's work for the LWAK; we do need some good and strong women leaders.
- We do not have enough members to carry out the work we should be doing.
- Most of the LWAK members do not like to attend meetings or participate in programme activities.

The Goals of the LWAK for its work

- to enrol many new Christian members
- to improve the women's role both in church and out of church
- to develop the potentiality of women in a positive way

The organized activities of the LWAK are :

- Kindergarten programme (for child welfare)
- Community children's library
- Hospital visitations
- Bazaar
- Adult camp programme (once a year)
- Seminar (once a year)
- Attending ecumenical meetings

The unorganized activities of the LWAK are :

- Making decorations for church observances and festivals
- Fellowship (to have communication among members)
- Picnic
- Relief work

The Lutheran Women's Association in Korea has ecumenical contacts with

- the Jung Ang Family Counselling Center operated under the auspices of the Korean NCC
- the Korean Church Women United, and with
- the Christian Monthly Magazine.

We think that the role of women with regard to the proclamation of the Gospel should be :

- to participate positively in church activities
- to discuss the problems, plan and solve them and
- to serve others in and out of the church.

We believe that we, the Lutheran Women's Association in Korea, can contribute towards human development when we practise, through various women's activities, the spirit and love of Jesus Christ. Mission, education, and service programmes will be the good, concrete ways of contribution towards human development.

Soon Hi Park

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore

Women in our church belong to Indian Community living among other races such as the Chinese and Malays, and in a country where the national religion is Islam. Our work is more concentrated among the Indian women who need the most attention. Indians form a minority group and due to certain working and living conditions they need greater opportunities to better themselves. They have many problems in which we as a group could help if we had adequate facilities and the right knowhow.

We are happy that we are formally organized in our church as Women Fellowship groups, and most of our church groups in Malaysia and Singapore have formed their own groups. Each group has a committee consisting of local voluntary leaders elected by their own Women Fellowship members. The committee plans and carries out the activities at local level and regional level.

Our women's work is part of the church structure and we thus have a department for work with and among women. This department functions with the help of a committee appointed by the diocesan council whose members work voluntarily except for the paid secretary. The committee meets once a month on the average or more often as the need arises, planning and carrying out the programmes more on the national level. It looks into the problems of women's work at regional and local level and helps them to co-ordinate their activities.

Our special areas of concern and problems in our society, especially among the Indian women, are as follows :

Most of the Indian women in the rural areas, the rubber estates, the coconut plantations and in the manual worker groups are illiterate. Their earning capacity and social standards are very low. They are superstitious and still cling on to old fashioned ways and behaviour. The idea still prevails that girls need not be educated much so that often it is

only the boys who are educated, and even that is not done adequately because of lack of financial means to give them a good education. Furthermore, it makes things difficult that the low income groups unfortunately have large families, which add to the misery of want. Family Planning is not effectively promoted to them. The family is too big for the meagre earnings of the father, and this leads to poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. The children are the most neglected. Often the father tries to escape from this misery and takes alcohol for relief. Children are not properly guided and become school drop-outs and juvenile delinquents.

As for problems in the church, women do not come forward to take up the leadership even though they are capable. This is due both to the lack of transport facilities and to family responsibilities. In rural areas the women lack leadership and self confidence and their families demand too much out of them. To overcome this, the women's work committee organizes many activities at national and regional level which include conventions, leadership courses, discussions, demonstrations, social get-togethers, medical advice, marriage counselling and community service.

Women of our church have set themselves goals for their work of which the main one is proclamation of the Gospel and nurturing of the Christian faith in and among women and their families. The others include the betterment of women in order to help them to have a good influence on their families.

We do not isolate ourselves from other women's group activities. We have contacts with national women's organizations such as Young Women's Christian Association and the Girl Guide movement. We are a member of the Least Coin Fellowship, and sent a representative to the Asia Women's Christian Movement. We organize and take part in fellowships at ecumenical level.

The role of women with regard to the proclamation of the Gospel is very vital. In church we should take an active part and help the pastors and elders. Women should be involved in Sunday School work and youth work as well as in women's work. In society, women who are teachers, doctors and nurses should make use of their golden opportunities in the proclamation of the Gospel. Everyone - whether working or not, as a mother, sister or housewife - should realize her noble role in her own area. Women should feel that they form the body of Christ. Individual members of the body have individual functions and with the help of the Holy Spirit the body of Christ can be glorified.

We women can contribute to human development by being the driving force in the family, the church and the society believing that God will use us according to His will and by showing obedience to His Will, giving forth praise in His Service and finding joy in the attitude of commitment.

Let our Lord God's will be done in us, for us and through us.

Regina Samuel

Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore

Our women of the Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore come from the deepest jungle kampongs in Perak to the highest high-rise flats in Singapore. They vary in occupation from the menial hard labourers to doctors, lawyers, and teachers. They are Chinese (primarily), Indian Aborigine, Indonesian, and expatriates from all over the world.

The Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore, organized in 1963 has no women's organization on the national level. However, a number of our local congregations have women's groups, and these occasionally meet on a district level. These groups meet weekly or monthly for Bible studies, singing, prayers, visitation of sick or inactive members of the church, and special programmes. Most of the leaders of these women's fellowships are pastor's wives or the spiritual women in the church appointed by the local church councils. They are all voluntary.

Even in congregations where there are no organized women's groups as such, the women are very involved in church ministry such as church council members, delegates to the national church convention, Sunday school teachers, vacation church teachers, organists, Bible women, teachers in church day care centers and kindergartens, Christian Media Services, church choirs, deaconesses, ushers, lay readers, secretaries, translators, etc. Often it is the women in the church who take care of the church decorations, teas, receptions, care of the altar, flowers, preparation for Holy Communion, cleaning of the church, etc. At our last national church convention a group of pastors' wives and lay-women voluntarily catered for the means.

In addition to church ministry, many of the women have become aware of the need for involvement in the ministry to the community through voluntary work within special homes and hospitals, as counselors and cub

scout and girl guide leaders, and, in Vietnam, refugee aid.

Some of our women have had seminary or Bible school training, and, although none are employed by the national church at present, some are engaged in tent ministry and some are wives of pastors within our church.

Our church is open for women to be ordained, but none have ever applied for ordination.

Our women participate in national, international and ecumenical programmes when the opportunity arises. Some of these are the World Day of Prayer, the Least Coin Fellowship, and events organized by the Lutheran World Federation Women's Desk.

Some of the concerns and problems of women in our church :

1. There are no leaders specially trained in women's work.
2. There are no materials available that are practical or appropriate for the mature women in our church in Malaysia and Singapore.
3. There are many illiterate women who for this reason are too shy to participate in church activities.
4. There is a real concern to educate these women.
5. On the whole our programmes within the church are geared to the young people. There is very little for the mature women who need Christian guidance for interpersonal relationships between husbands, children and mothers-in-law.
6. Christian women need outlets and opportunities to discuss the everyday problems of being Christian wives, mothers, and daughters in a non-Christian society.
7. Many of the women are students and first generation Christians who need guidance and counsel from mature Christians.
8. Our women of the church need to be aware of the special needs and concerns of the young people, especially those first generation new Christians.
9. Women in this society are wanting deeper and more meaningful relationships with their husbands - a one to one relationship.

The role of women with regard to the proclamation of the Gospel should be one of conducting our daily lives in such a way that others will see that it is good to be Christians. By the way we act with our husbands, our children, our mothers-in-law, the marketmen, all with whom we come into contact, and through our activities in and our attitudes towards the church, we will determine the kind of witnesses we make. (Matthew 5:16 ; Philipians 2:15)

Our primary goal at this time is to organize a women's group for the Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore so that we may better solve

these problems and concerns which are stated above and that we will be strengthened through the prayerful fellowship of others to enable us to fulfill our role as faithful witnesses to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We pray for the guidance of the Holy Sprit that this goal shall be reached and that through such an organization God's Word shall feed the hungry of this our land. (Galatians 5:22-23a, 25; St. John 6:35).

Tan Yoke Lan

Lutheran Church in the Philippines

Women's participation in church and society has now become a driving force and an inspiration for action in human development, especially in developing countries like the Philippines. Most of the roles of the church today in relation to human development could be performed by women especially in the areas of social, cultural, economic, civic, health and technical development.

This report deals mainly with women in the Lutheran Church in the Philippines: their role with regard to proclamation of the Gospel; their problems and special areas of concern in their society and church; and the possible ways women could contribute towards human development.

We want to present our report based on the role of Filipino women in Philippine society by and large beginning with pre-Hispanic times to the present.

According to statistics, the Philippines has become the only Christian country in the Far East. It is an Asian archipelago of 7,007 islands discovered by Magellan in 1521. It has today a population of roughly 45 million, about 85% of whom are baptized Roman Catholics, 7% Protestants, about 3% Muslims and the rest Animists.

STATUS OF FILIPINO WOMEN

From a background paper submitted by Ms Imelda R. Marcos to the International Women's Conference held in Mexico City in June 1975, on "The Role of Women in the Philippines" stated that "more than most Asian, or indeed, Western women, the Filipina occupies numerous positions of high responsibility at home and at work. Yet, she rarely gets the top administrative or political positions. The equalitarian pattern evident in family decision-making does not carry over into the morality area where men's indiscretions are tolerated by the community but women's transgressions correspondingly condemned. She forms a growing part of the

labour force encouraged by a favourable educational picture, yet she finds herself discriminated against in hiring procedures and getting less pay in equal work with men. Her individual worth is well recognized, but economic contributions as housewife go unrecorded in GNP figures. Her primary role is the home and family. Her profession, for example, being a teacher or physician place a low second in her scale of priorities. Her contributions to raising farm family income is clear to any observer of rural work patterns, yet development and training programmes focus on her husband as the target of a farm modernization. Her new knowledge is largely limited to family planning. Most of this is further reinforced in the children's formative years by school curricula differentiating vocational training for girls and boys. The "modern" Filipina has gone far indeed in relation to other women. But this comparative advantage internationally should be examined within the Philippine setting."

First during the Spanish time - - Before the Spaniards brought Western culture to the Philippines, women seemed to enjoy an "easy equality not based on condescension but on genuine respect". The Penal Code of Kalantiao respected and protected women with a chivalry unknown in the rest of Asia.

According to Father Chirino the "Filipina" is referred to as "the queen of the home" and her man. She ruled with her husband, whether over Sultanate or fishing village. She could rule in the absence of male heirs.

Someone said, "The Filipino women from their respected egalitarian status in pre-Hispanic times was that of the shy, diffident, puritanical, tear-stained little women of the late 19th Century". The Spanish friar baptized or taught her the ways of the Spanish woman. As a young girl she was trained to obey her father and the parish priest, to cast her eyes down, to pray the rosary, to be pure, to hide her emotions, to look upon all men as the devil incarnate. She was taught her catechism, embroidery, cooking and "the joys of Heaven".

The Roman Catholic Church, for all its claims that it has elevated women's position to the pedestal level, actually has a history of maligning women as the cause of man's downfall. It is sad that through this persistent opinion (even to this day) the church insinuated the inferior status of women. Pope Pius XII in his address on "Women's Duties in Social and Political Life" explores "the vast field of activity that women may follow in civil and political life without at the same time failing in their primary duties as wives and mothers". Vatican II documents likewise insist that the "domestic role" of mother must be safely preserved.

Then the American Regime - - The American tutelage or care of the Filipina - "so imitative, appreciative, glad to be educated, ambitious to learn" - liberated her from Spanish conservatism. Here, the Filipina went to school, learned independence of character and individualism, obtained suffrage in 1937, entered the political arena and at least the restricted class that reached the top of the education ladder became a little "brown American".

But still, there is the double standard. The Philippines is still a man's world, where women have their fixed role to play - homemaking with the profession as a "sideline".

And now - - Today, under the Marcos administration, the status of the Filipino women cannot be described without evaluating it in the light of the present political, socio-economic and cultural setting. The Philippines at present is being ruled by a single political leader under martial law. One of the emphasis of the administration has been the creation of a "new society". To reach that goal the whole structure of society has been re-examined. Now instead of a concern for "women in society", the emphasis has been on the worth or value of the individual, male or female, old or young, rich or poor, literate or illiterate.

The above viewpoints at least partially will give you a general picture of why the Filipino women act the way they do.

The Filipino woman is being a part of the New Society in general, limited and restricted to presidential decrees. But the home-making business still has precedence; teaching, running a small store, farming and the like, are just "sidelines".

This status is conveniently carried down to church work. Women are still by nature diffident, shy, domestic, a condition brought about by the cultures of the different colonizers of the country.

One part of the problem is the structure of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines. In its constitution and by-laws there is no clear cut or specific role for women in the church. But according to our knowledge, from the past to the present Lutheran women are encouraged to witness or proclaim the Gospel through teaching in Sunday school, Youth Bible classes and other areas of Christian education.

The Lutheran Church in the Philippines is composed of three districts: the South Luzon District, around Manila, the North Luzon District, and the Mindanao District.

The Philippines is composed of many islands, and this situation limits us where communication is concerned. This is one of the reasons why the reporters have limited themselves to the progress of the Metro Manila Women's Organization. But we hope and are confident that other districts are following the same pattern, working for the same goals and objectives as formulated in the Planning Seminar held in November 1975.

The "Altar Guild" or "Ladies Aid" is in charge of arranging flowers, preparing the Communion vessels, and the like. Women may also possibly serve as ushers, can be "observers" in Church Council meetings, can chair the Hospitality Committee (if any), and the like.

SPECIAL CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS

Some of the major problems of Lutheran women in the Philippines are :

1. Lack of awareness and sensitivity to the need of the community, society and the church.
2. Limited educational opportunities (formal/informal) for the majority of the Lutheran girls and women especially in the rural areas.
3. Need of a strong formal women's organization (local or national level).
4. Need of qualified leaders to train women/girls for leadership especially in the rural areas.
5. Some of us have not discovered the Christian faith as a value or a basic need in life.
6. Many of us cannot find our specific role in the local congregation and in the local community where we live.
7. Many of us do not have either the skill or the tools which we need to be effective in the roles which are assigned to us.
8. The local parish/congregation does not have the specific structure to ensure continuity in the role of women in the church.

As a result of the "Women's Seminar in LCP" in Manila last November 16th-19th, 1975, one of the major decisions made was a proposal to organize a national organization, to be called, "Philippine Lutheran Women's League". with the following goals :

1. To encourage and provide education for the grass roots.
2. To develop leadership among women.
3. To engage in education for nutrition, hygiene and health in cooperation with other agencies.
4. To assist unemployed people to find jobs.
5. To integrate women's activities with that of other organizations involved with community development.
6. To assist with Christian education.
7. To promote equal opportunities for women and men in the church at all levels.
8. To assist pastors in planning and carrying out church activities.
9. To engage in family education (devotion, marriage counselling, family planning, etc.)
10. To encourage women to participate in both religious and civic organizations.
11. To further friendly relations between the Muslim and Christian community.

WHAT WE THINK THE ROLE OF WOMEN WITH REGARD TO PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

According to the Scriptures, there is no male or female in proclaiming the Gospel. This is clearly understood in the Lutheran Church in the Philippines. But what bothers us is how to implement this role in a clear-cut way. As mentioned earlier, there is no definite role for Lutheran women in the church, especially in the areas of decision-making.

As a product of tradition, the Lutheran women are diffident, shy and not assertive enough to examine and investigate their specific role in the church. But there are some "modern" Filipino Lutheran women now asking what this is. They feel they can do something beneficial to the church and community if only they are given the opportunity and moral support of the church. Frankly, we would think that proclamation of the Gospel should be open to both men and women. We feel that if any women were given the same opportunity and training as men, they could have great potential in partnership with men.

Rev. Ronald Biel, TEE Director in the Lutheran Church in the Philippines, stated that 60% of the total membership of the LCP are girls and women. This should be a legitimate reason for women to be trained for leadership in the church. We feel this is the reason why LCP should discuss the role of women in the church in their coming Convention in October 1976.

So far Lutheran women in the Philippines are becoming more aware of what they can do for their church and community. In February 1976, several women in the Greater Manila Area met and discussed possible ways of uniting to attain their goals for human development.

As a result of this meeting, they elected officers for the Metro Manila area in their March meeting. These officers were installed in June at the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Manila. The Metro Manila officers are in the process of rallying other Lutheran women from the South Luzon District to form a Regional or District Women's League.

CONCLUSION

We feel that our main need is for adequate leadership training in the church, to make us aware and sensitive to the needs and problems of the church and the community where we live.

Emma Alunen

Rosabella P. Natividad

Taiwan Lutheran Church

The Taiwan Lutheran Church Sister Fellowship was organized in 1959. It was a voluntary effort by the women leaders of different local congregations who all realized that a joint organization was needed in order to maintain a closer relationship and to promote services on a larger scale. Officers were finally elected and a constitution amended and passed by the fifth annual conference which was held in 1964 at the Lutheran Seminary in Taichung.

The leaders of the Taiwan Lutheran Church Sister Fellowship are one chairperson and two vice chairpersons (the three usually representing the northern, central and southern part of Taiwan), one financial secretary, one English secretary, one treasurer, one business manager, and three other officers, responsible for organization and training, relief and evangelical work respectively.

It was also decided that the term of office should be two years. New officers should be elected at the representatives' meeting to be held every two years at the same time as the annual summer conference.

In 1968 women's work became formally considered as part of the church structure when a committee for women's work was formed to pay special attention to women's activities in all the church congregations and at the same time to serve as an advisory body to the TLC Sister Fellowship. Special funds are allotted for the committee meeting and a subsidy is given to the annual summer conference. A full-time secretary has been working for this committee. However, because of a recent structural change in the TLC the committee for women's work will in future combine with other committees under the title of Education Committee.

As our 42 church congregations are all situated from north to south along the western side of the island, they are grouped under 4 districts, namely

Taipei, Taichung, Chia-Nan and Kaohsiung. The women of Taipei district have long been organized and for years have had their regular meeting once every three months with one of the congregations as hostess. The Kaohsiung women have recently succeeded in having their own joint meeting twice a year. However, because of lack of leadership and initiative, the Taichung and Chianan districts have not yet been organized.

Apart from pastors wives, missionaries, and Bible women, women from all walks of life have taken an active part in the promotion of women's work. It is not unusual for women to become members of the board of deacons in their own congregation. As a result women's voices are heard and their needs are usually attended to. Leadership in women's work is mostly voluntary since not every congregation is able to afford a paid woman worker. Besides, educated women seldom want to go into church work which is neither well paid nor promising. The shortage of woman church workers has become a very serious problem to us, since even the congregations with enough financial means cannot employ a suitable specialist in women's work. They all have to put up with whatever leadership they have in their own congregation.

Christians in Taiwan make up only 2 - 3% of the total population. Unless we can draw more educated young people into the church, the future will be even dimmer. At present we are trying our best to encourage our women to become active member in their own women's groups. During the annual conferences much emphasis has been laid on leadership training and the introduction of new ideas and working methods. This is made possible by inviting as speakers experts in different fields.

In the past 20 -odd years TLC has received a rather large amount of financial help from different European and American missionary organizations. It has been decided that from 1978 on all congregations as well as the Synod office will have to be self-supporting. So one of our goals is to encourage our women to offer as much as possible in order to meet all the necessary expenses.

It is a known fact that the stronger the women's group the more prosperous is the church. Women are in the decision-making body, and they are by far in the majority in the church. They are also the ones who carry out most of the acts of love such as visitation and caring for the needy, sick and aged.

Our women observe the World Day of Prayer every year and take part in many inter-denominational evangelical operations such as the Billy Graham Crusade. Since the Catholic church in Taiwan has a very different attitude towards ancestral worshipping - which they seem to encourage - this proves to be a very strong obstacle to the ecumenical movement, because we consider ancestral worship also to be a form of idolatry.

When we see the word 'proclamation' we tend to think that it means something formal and on a grand scale. The ordinary woman will think that she is not the gifted kind who can handle a thing like proclamation of the Gospel. She will think that this is the job for a trained church

worker. Let us call to mind to the very lowly woman who had the good fortune to meet Jesus by the well in Sychar Samaria. What training or special gift did she have to enable her to proclaim Jesus to the people of the city? Yet the Bible says, "Many Samaritians from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony", and many more believed because the woman had led them to Jesus and let them see and hear Jesus for themselves. It is quite clear that every woman who has received the Grace from Jesus can and should testify for Him. It is our verbal and living testimony that the Gospel is proclaimed.

One half of the world's population consists of women. Underdeveloped women make for an underdeveloped world. Educated women with self respect, who are aware of their responsibility towards humankind are an asset to the world. With one half of its potential resources underdeveloped, the world suffers a great loss. It goes without saying that Christian men and women should take equal shares in the responsibility of furthering human development by trying their utmost to live a fully Christian life.

It is therefore important that we should encourage our women to make use of every opportunity to enlarge the scope of their knowledge, to be aware of all the important issues in the world, and to have the social awareness to stand up as responsible persons, instead of taking whatever work is given to them. It is the willingness to bear responsibility that helps a person to develop and become mature. The church should lead the community in doing away with sex discrimination in leadership development. In so doing it will double its resources in manpower.

Victoria Wang

Au tralasia

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea

Women in the church are organized formally, the name of the women's organization on the national level being 'WOMEN OF THE CHURCH'. Each district has its own name.

Women's work is part of the church structure, and comes under the Evangelism Department. It is led by the National Committee whose members are the leaders of women's organization in each district.

There is organization on all levels : village, congregation, circuit, district, national.

District and circuit level leaders for women's work are full-time, whereas leaders at congregation and village level work voluntarily.

Both society and church are faced with the problems of drinking and playing cards for money. Other problems are : girls finishing school at grade 6 and coming into the towns where there is no work for them; young people seeing and reading comics which give them bad ideas.

Our aim is to give honour and glory to Jesus Christ through words and actions, so that others may know Jesus as their Saviour and as the source of life here in this world and in the world to come.

The activities of my church, apart from weekly Bible studies, are such things as helping the aged, the sick, mothers with new babies, and pastors, teachers and evangelists with food, gardening, firewood, etc. Other activities include providing soap and books for the hospital. The women along with the youth help in teaching at Sunday School. The women financially support their district offices in most areas. The offerings are also used to help with activities in the congregation, such as building the church,

buying altar cloths, vessels for Holy Communion. The women do a lot of catering for meetings.

Every two years there is a national convention for the women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea. This convention lasts for two weeks.

As far as international visits are concerned, we have had some women visitors from overseas churches. A few women have also travelled overseas with the church and also with the Government Education Department.

As for ecumenical activities the World Day of Prayer provides one contact and the women have attended other churches for these meetings.

Women should proclaim the Gospel through their everyday living with their families, their worship service, through song, prayer and through the leading of devotions and Bible studies.

Gabby Gedisa

Europe

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark has no official women's organizations, but there are a number of women's work groups in the various parishes throughout the country. To a large extent these groups are interested in foreign mission work and are engaged in collecting money (through bazaars etc.) in support of the various Danish missionary societies. Many of them are directly associated with foreign missionary societies, but others are more in the nature of Bible circles or literary study circles.

These women's groups are especially active within the church movement called INDRE MISSION (Home Mission), although they also work in parishes not particularly influenced by I.M.. Of organized women's work there are two factions : the K.F.U.K. (Y.W.C.A.) which in Denmark works along confessional lines, although it is also engaged in ecumenical work, and a smaller organization by the name of KRISTNE KVINDERS LAEG-MANDSBEVAEGELSE (Christian Lay Women's Movement), the K.K.L.. The K.F.U.K. is spread over almost every part of the country while the K.K.L. mostly comprises groups in the bigger towns. The large Girl Guides Association works together with Y.W.C.A. .

As regards salaried women workers the I.M. employs a few factory or street missionaries; the KIRKENS KIRSHAER (Church Army), which in Denmark is a social enterprise under the Lutheran Church, employs a number of full-time women workers. The K.F.U.K. has secretaries in the bigger towns and a few districts as well as on a national basis (at present

twelve altogether); and the K.F.U.K. girl scouts corps employs 4 full-time national secretaries. In the home staff of the foreign missionary societies men and women are almost equally represented, while in the 'mission fields' there are twice as many women as men.

According to the Ministry of Church Affairs there are approximately 88 women ministers in office out of around 1600, and this number will probably increase during the coming years. Most of these ministers are second or third ministers in the churches, although there are more and more 'sognepraester', the designation for a 'senior pastor'. At a new church in the vicinity of Copenhagen both offices of First and Second minister are held by women. Of the theological students at the University of Copenhagen and Århus roughly 35% are women.

There are very many non-organized women workers, and it is difficult to estimate the exact number. They are primarily engaged in work among children (Sunday schools, girls' clubs, girl guides), youth activities, and work in women's groups. More than half the teachers giving religious instruction in state schools are women.

A statistical survey shows that there are still very few women members of councils and committees with administrative power. Out of ten - twelve members of a board of directors usually at the most two or three are women. Nowhere is there an equal representation of men and women in management except for the joint management of the K.F.U.M. (Y.M.C.A.) and K.F.U.K., nationally as well as locally, and this is due solely to the stubborn emphasis placed by the national board of directors of the K.F.U.K. at every revision of the statutes on the importance of the influencing women to assume equal responsibility with men.

It should be noted, however, that a rough estimate shows about 30% of the member of the local congregational councils to be women.

Besides the above mentioned activities, it should be added that the greater part of women's contribution to congregational work takes place 'behind the scenes', e.g. the practical arrangement of things - the quiet and unobtrusive effort.

It is almost always difficult to persuade women to conduct meetings or to ask for the right to speak to audiences that include men. It is much easier in places where there are only women present. On such occasions they express themselves freely and give extremely good speeches, often both better and more objective than those given by men in mixed gatherings. So it must be deeply deplored that not more women take courage and accept their share of responsibility and leadership.

With this background one might conclude that it would be better to do away with specific women's movements, thus forcing women to assume their part of leadership in mixed contexts. Others feel that for the very same

reasons it is essential to have many exclusively women's groups as they may serve as training grounds and make the acceptance of responsibility possible.

For further information it should be added that the ecumenical enterprise called DANSKE KIRKEDAGE (Danish Church Days), which takes place every fourth year, runs study groups on "Sexual Roles and Christianity". These studies have been continued by ecumenical women's groups connected with the two ecumenical centres in Copenhagen and Århus, among others. The theological faculties of both Århus and Copenhagen universities have women's groups aiming at conscientization of the theological students.

Danish women share with Danish men and children the privileges, responsibilities and plights of living in a Scandinavian welfare society, member of the European Economic Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The socio-political and cultural agenda for change in such a society is also our agenda as women, and the many informal secular/church-related women's groups will consider various parts of this agenda as 'their job' (small school groups, kindergarten improvement groups, development groups, pressure groups within political parties etc.). Preparing and encouraging women to take leadership seems to be a fairly common denominator for many of these groups. The conditioning of the women's understanding of themselves as inferior human beings by their traditional role of bringing up children and the (unconscious) attitudes within the society are widely felt as main concerns of such groups, and much literature has been published on the subject.

Women being made into an object by the advertising and porno industries has increasingly become a concern of these groups. An equal-rights commission (ligestillingsradet) works at government level to create both laws and state-administration which reflect equal rights for men and women (de facto there is not equal pay for equal work in all trade unions).

The Council On Interchurch Relations of the Lutheran Church of Denmark (DEN DANSKE FOLKEKIRKES MELLEMKIRKELLIGE RAD) is our channel for contact with other churches in the world. On this council there are very few women, six out of 83 to be exact. In the Ecumenical Council of Denmark, consisting of representatives of the Lutheran National Church, the Free Churches, and the Roman Catholic Church, there are 20 women among 93 members.

The K.F.U.K. is related internationally to the Y.W.C.A. World Federation in Geneva and at home to DANSKE KVINDERS NATIONALRAD (Danish Women's National Council). In this council practically all Danish women's organizations, large and small, are represented. Thus women's work as such within the Lutheran National Church is in no way related to any of the other Danish national women's organizations.

However, in certain cases local groups are in touch with one another, as for example in the Bible study groups run by the Danish Housewives' Association in co-operation with local ministers and congregations, thereby indirectly, so to speak, being in connection with DANSKE KVINDERS NATIONALRAD.

In the West we have inherited a way of organizing our experience of the world which operates on a 'centre-periphery' system. Power (political, economic, educational, based on sex or colour or tradition) is the centre of reality, and the further from the power-structures one is, the further from 'real life'. But what if we were wrong in also organizing our perception of the Kingdom of God along these lines? What if we were wrong in thinking that the Kingdom in its manifestations on earth would also reflect such a system? What if we really believed that a reality (secular or ecclesiastical) manifesting the signs of the Kingdom would not be divided in centre and periphery according to socio-economic / cultural patterns ("there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free") or sex barriers ("there is neither male or female") (Gal. 3:28) ? Our proclamation and living the Gospel would become different.

Anna Marie Aagaard

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

Women's work in the Lutheran Church of Finland is an integral part of regular parish work. It has been started by Christian organizations, but over decades has developed to a special form of congregational activities. Christian women's organizations like the YWCA and the White Band, are now working in cooperation - but independently - with Lutheran parishes. However, they are basically ecumenical, and, therefore, cannot be church organizations.

Church women have built up a very loose kind of organization. At the local level the Parish Council, the body in charge of the spiritual leadership in the congregation, may appoint a committee for women's activities. Out of the 600 parishes in the country approximately one third have official committees on women's work. Some others have called more informal women's groups to plan activities serving women in the congregation.

In accordance with the basic independency of local parishes in the Finnish Lutheran Church structure, women's work is planned individually in each congregation. The committees on women's work are in no ways linked together to a regional or national organization. No kind of organizational coordination or administrative unification has even been encouraged, nor has any demand been made to appoint a committee on women's work for every congregation.

This attitude is based on two principles. One of them is appreciation of the independency of the local parish mentioned above. The other principle is one of the basic ideas of the women's work itself. Women's work must serve current needs of local people. The programmes cannot be brought in from outside. The persons in charge of the programme-planning must study the needs and aspirations of people living in their own neighbourhood, and construct their programmes in a way in which their real needs are met.

At the national level the Lutheran Church appointed a committee on women's work for the first time in 1954. The Church Synod elects six members of the committee. Since 1965 the committee has a full-time secretary. The task of the national committee is seen partly as a supporter and coordinator of the work of local committees, and partly as a body in charge of nation-wide tasks of the women's work in the church.

In the beginning of the year 1977 the Committee on Women's Work will, however, be dissolved by the resolution of the Church Synod. The motion was made by the committee itself. The tasks of the committee will be assigned to three other church commissions. The special issues of women will be studied and dealt with by the Committee on Church and Society and the Board of Family Questions. The women's work of the congregations will be seen as a part of adult education and will be pursued by the Commission on Education. The secretary for women's work will be transferred to the post of the Secretary for Adult Education. Developing women's work and charge of relations with national and international women's organizations are expressly mentioned in her job description.

Leadership of Women's Work

Since so far ordination has not been accepted for women in the Lutheran Church of Finland, a special ministry of lectors was established in 1963 for women theologians. There are at the moment 206 lectors in the church who have the right to most of the tasks included in the pastoral ministry. The women's work is mentioned in the job description of about half of the lectors' offices. All of these lectors, however, have other obligations in the parish as well. They do pastoral counselling, confirmation instruction, preaching, etc. and they may be in charge of a special field of parish work, e.g. missionary work, Christian education, diaconia.

There are very few part-time employees in the field of the women's work, but a great number of Bible study and discussion group leaders and leaders of special activities like handicrafts, gymnastics, sewing, cooking, etc. work on the voluntary basis. Unfortunately, there are no statistics showing the number of leaders in the whole country.

Special areas of concern and problems of women in the society

The Finnish women have attained almost all the rights they have been striving for since the end of the 19th century. They gained the franchise and eligibility in the parliamentary elections in 1906. Now they have equal political rights, access to all public offices (with very few exceptions, e.g. military and some police offices). For this reason the denial of the church ministry of women in the Lutheran state church has been heavily criticized in the society.

Because of the compulsory school system women and men are absolutely equal in terms of educational opportunities. Girls outnumber boys in High Schools, and at the university level 47 per cent of students are women.

In the labour market women are generally dealt with on equal terms. The U.N. recommendation on equal pay for equal work has been ratified by the

Parliament. In fact, however, women face many difficulties in building a career.

The equal pay is only a theoretical fact. With very few exceptions women get the same salary for the same work as men. But the jobs are very often classified according to the gender, and women's jobs make almost always lower pay than men's jobs. In the industry women earn 70% of men's salaries. Also opportunities of further education in-service and advanced positions are often reserved for men, only because their career is regarded as more important.

A fairly long maternity leave lasting up to six months is one of the most recent achievements of women in Finland. It also means, however, that the employers are often reluctant to hire young married women, if they also have a choice of men and single women candidates. The disadvantages in job opportunities and payment systems are the main problems faced by women in Finland. In spite of a rather high living standard, salaries of men in low income groups are not high enough to meet even the basic needs of the family. Most women work outside home for financial reasons. On the other hand, women of higher income classes are usually well educated, and like to keep up their professional skills by working. In addition, many women are divorcees and widows living alone with their children. In spite of social security aid, these women are those with the greatest economic hardships.

Summarizing the situation of women in Finland, theoretically they have an equal status with men in all sectors of life. And comparing their living conditions with those of people in the rest of the world, their share is one of the best. The problems still remaining are in the field of obsolete attitudes. Women are not regarded as suitable for leadership positions; women's work is not always valued as important as men's work. And there still are prejudices about women in the labour market.

The major problems are connected with the care of children. A choice between bread winning and staying at home with infants is for most mothers only theoretical. They cannot afford not to work. And because of insufficient crèche and kindergarten facilities, they have often continuous worries about their children.

Concerns and problems of women in the church

One of the main topics of debate in the church in large, and among women particularly, is the ordination of women to the ministry. This year the debate is of high actuality since the Church Synod is to take a vote on the ordination of women in November 1976. Prior to the decision of the Synod all parish councils must answer two questions :

- a) Is the ordination of women possible according to the faith and the-doctrine of the church?
- b) Should the ordination of women be realized at the present time?

This problem has become ever more burning year after year, since the breach between the status of women in the society and that in the church is widening all the time. Most people cannot understand why the ministry

of the church ought to be seen differently from other vocations of people. The exclusion of women from the ministry is regarded as a violation upon equality of genders and as an underestimation of women.

Thus the ordination of women has been a popular topic in all women's groups and organizations, and in mass media. It has been discussed even by the Parliament.

A Gallup-inquiry in July 1976 revealed that 73% of the population (most of whom are Lutherans) are in favour of the ordination of women and only 13% against it.

However, the opposition is much higher among active parish members and ministers, particularly among those supporting different pietistic, fundamentalist, and high church movements. Ever since 1963 the majority of the Church Synod has voted for the ordination of women, but the motion has never gained the stipulated majority of 3/4 needed in these kinds of resolutions.

Because they are not ordained, women cannot apply for any posts in the church classified as pastor's offices. Instead a special ministry of lector was established for women theologians. Lectors are, however, regarded as laypeople.

In the role of laity women are equal to men. They can be elected to all church bodies as lay members. In many administrative bodies the number of women is lower than that of men partly because a certain quota of places are reserved for the clergy.

The proportion of women in church leadership is nevertheless higher than in the leading bodies of the state and municipalities. In the Church Synod 30% of the laypeople and 19% of the total membership are women. In Parliament the representation of women is 22%. In the parish councils the percentage of women is 44, and in the parish administrative boards 30. In the municipal councils 15 % are women.

In one of the eight Diocesan Chapters the only lay member, a lawyer, is a woman. In the Ecclesiastical Board, consisting of 15 members representing the dioceses and the Bishops' Conference, one of the members is a woman.

Thus the disapproval of the ordination of women limits their full participation in church life. Otherwise, as laypersons they have every possibility for active leadership, particularly at the local level.

Therefore, the unsolved question of ordination is one of the main discussion themes of women. They feel that in this debate the full humanity of women is at stake.

Other concerns in the church troubling women are often related to ethic ambiguity of Christians in a secularized and pluralistic society. They feel insecure about their children's Christian Education. Especially

sexual behaviour has changed remarkably during their lifetime. Abortion, which is practically free in Finland, is one sign of change in attitudes.

Problems relating to mental health are often on the agenda of women's meetings. A special hardship is growing loneliness due to the changing of their world from a rural agricultural community to an urban industrial society.

Women's longer life expectancy compared with that of men means a great number of lonely women retirees. There are also a considerable number of single women, divorcees, and widows living in the cities alone or with children.

These problems and others like them are, of course, not only concerns of church women. Rather they are challenges to women's work in the church.

Goals of the women's work in the church

The goals for the women's work in the Lutheran Church have been formulated in the regulations of the church and parish committees on women's work. They are worded almost identically at local and national levels. The objectives are as follows :

1. to encourage women to live as Christians in the home, in the vocation, and in civic activities,
2. to study the development of the role of women in church, society, family, and working life, in the aspect of Christian faith,
3. to make women more conscious of their responsibilities towards the mission of the church, and to grant them possibilities to work for parishes and for the church.

Activities of women in the church

In planning the women's work the point of departure is the fact that 92 % of the population are nominal members of the Lutheran church; the majority of them do not take part in any church activity. Some are quite indifferent about the life of the church. Some have positive feelings about it, but have not found any activity helpful or interesting for themselves.

Therefore, one of the leading ideas of the women's work is an attempt to reach women who do not attend regular church activities. The items for discussion are mostly problems faced by women in their everyday lives. A special attention is paid to contacts with women's organizations and other organized women's groups. Larger meetings are often arranged together with secular women's groups. Sometimes discussions are held with a special group on their specific problems, e.g. with a professional group facing problems of human relations in their occupation.

It is, in fact, difficult to list women's activities in the church, since women are in the majority in all church activities; e.g. most diaconia and missionary groups consist either solely of women members, or otherwise with a large majority of women members. In addition, about 70 % of those attending divine services and devotional meetings are women.

Therefore, in this paper women's work is considered to be parish work which has been planned by a women's group to serve special needs of women.

One of the most common hardships felt by women is loneliness and lack of human relations. The formation of small groups may be one answer to this need.

There are many group gatherings in the parish. Those with greatest participation are the Bible study circles and discussion groups dealing with contemporary topics or problems faced by members themselves. Sometimes there are special groups for mothers of small children, single parents, parents of retarded or handicapped children, divorcees, returnees from mental hospitals.

Some groups gather together to offer services. They may visit lonesome old people, patients in hospitals, people just moved in the neighbourhood, parents of recently baptized children. In order to collect money some people work together at hand crafts, luncheons, bazaars, etc. Many women like to learn new skills, cooking, sewing, hand crafts, gardening and at the same time make friends in an easy way.

Lives of women working both in and outside the home are often very hard. They prefer recreational type of activities. In many parishes therefore are groups for gymnastics, volley-ball, and other forms of sport easy enough for anybody to practise. Excursions and sometimes even long trips are organized by congregations at reasonable rates. In summertime especially women's groups are invited to camp sites and training centres of their parishes to rest and to make new human contacts.

One of the most important tasks of the Committee on Women's Work in a local parish is to make proposals and motions to deciding bodies in order to develop parish activities to meet more effectively the needs of women and families.

At the national level the Committee on Women's Work strives to maintain contacts with both Christian and secular women's organizations. The committee represents women's work in the church and concerns of church women in national and international discussions. In the church the committee is in charge of special issues concerning women. Besides that the committee supports local parish work by training leadership in adult educational methods, by arranging seminars on women's concerns, and by consulting leadership about practical working problems.

National, International, and Ecumenical Contacts

The committees on Women's work at both local and national levels maintain a great deal of collaboration with women's organizations. In many places the YWCA and White Band associations work closely together with church women. There is only very little contact with women's work in other churches. The World Day of Prayer has offered one channel for cooperation.

There are also many secular women's organizations who have close relations with local congregations, especially those working in the fields of home economics and agriculture, as well as charity. Many contacts have

been built even with political women's organizations. In many places these contacts have been more easily established by women than by men.

The only regular contacts which the church women in Finland have at the international level are their contacts with the Women's Desks of the WCC and the LWF.

The Role of Women with regard to the Proclamation of the Gospel

As mentioned above, women in the Lutheran Church of Finland are not allowed to be ordained to the ministry. However, most lectors have got the right to preach in public, even in divine services.

It is of vital importance that women participate in the proclamation of the Gospel. The Holy Scriptures have always been interpreted by men only. Therefore, the special point of view of women emerging out of their life experience has not been taken into consideration in understanding the message of God. One of the serious failures resulting from this disadvantage is the fact that the image of Christian women is designed by men only. Thus women have always been described in relation to men, i.e. either as wives and mothers or as sexual traps.

Now women have to give their share in the interpretation of the Gospel and of life. They have an obligation to help one another to find out the authentic role of a Christian woman. Their share can also contribute to a fuller understanding of the biblical message given to the whole humankind, both men and women. This could help all people to see the real relevance of the Gospel in the contemporary world.

Women's Contribution towards Human Development

Women's role in human development seems to be quite obvious in the Third World. Unless women are able to take care of the welfare of the whole family, the survival of the nation is badly endangered. The development of any group of people is largely dependend on the resources given to women to fulfil their mission as mothers, nurses, and educators of their own children.

Women in every country, but especially in countries where they only devote a few years of their lives to parental obligations, must take their share of responsibility in the economic, social, and civic life. It can be of great importance to the development of all of these sectors. The participation of women not only eases the burden of men, and duplicates human resources, production and income, but it also makes these sectors of community life more human.

While engaging their own capacities, their female life experiences, their special concerns in common work, women may enrich the men's world. With new insights, new ways of acting, new attitudes and values, women may even humanize the life of men.

This presupposes, however, that women not only adapt themselves to the systems designed by men, but they appreciate their own capabilities and the way of acting and thinking. This also implies that women do really

integrate in society without trying to create a female community of their own. In order to make this possible it is inevitable that there is an equitable proportion of women in all sectors of life. Women cannot make themselves heard if there are only one or two of them in mainly male professions, political organs, boards of associations.

One of women's main obligations for development is to encourage one another to accept responsible duties and commissions in society.

Riitta Virkkunen

Evangelical Church in Germany, FRG

On the national level, the Evangelical women's organizations have joined to form the Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Deutschland. This association furthers women's interests and represents women's work within the Evangelical Church in Germany which includes the Lutheran, the Reformed and United Territorial Churches. Thus, there is no national Lutheran women's organization.

Most leaders of women's work on the local level work voluntarily. Territorial and national organizations may also have voluntary leaders as presidents etc. Most organizations, boards and agencies, however, have full time or part time leadership.

Although legally there is no discrimination, women in our society are confronted with considerable problems. Women do not have equal opportunities in public life and within the economic system. They suffer from the consequences of quick social change and they have to bear much of its burden. The conflicts and sufferings resulting from this situation are not so obvious because they are mostly concealed by material well-being. They do, however, seriously handicap the life of women and men.

In economic life women are considered as a cheap labor force. The majority of industrial workers put on low wage scales are women. Due to this, the average income per hour of female industrial workers in 1973 was 30% less than that of men. In the same year, female employees in business and industry earned 38% less than their male colleagues. Only few women have responsible positions in business, industry and administration. In times of rising unemployment, there is a special threat that women may lose their jobs. Women

who have given up their jobs for the period while they raise their children will have to be satisfied with less qualified jobs. Although there is a legal assistance for them in terms of additional vocational training, the chance of their reaching higher levels of employment is slim. A career is considered as something for men. The economic system depends on women as a reserve labor force which can be employed or dismissed according to the needs of the moment.

In educational and vocational training, the situation of young women has improved but is still less favorable than that of young men. In 1973, 35% of the graduates with higher school education and 30% of the students at universities were women. Marriage being considered the normal career of a woman, vocational training of women is neglected. One fifth of all girls receive no training. For girls, parents prefer jobs which need a shorter training period. Young women who get married while in the process of education or training often do not continue their studies.

Politics are almost completely determined by men. Women have the right to vote and between 10% and 19% of the members of political parties are women. The percentage of women who are members of labor unions is about 16,5%. Representation of women in local, territorial and federal parliaments and government is far from being appropriate. In the legislative period from 1972 to 1976 only 6,6% of the members of the Federal Parliament were women. There are 21 million women in the country over 25 years of age. 14 million are married, 4,5 million are widowed, 2 million are single, 0,7 million are divorced. Two thirds of them are housewives who work only for their families. 5 million of them have children under 18 years of age.

The traditional concept of the woman's role as housewife and mother is still the dominating one in our society. Although women are not considered as having special problems, their overall situation is damaging to them and affects their view of themselves and their health. Ensuing from their present housing conditions and their restriction to their own family, many women suffer from social isolation. In a money-oriented society, the work of housewives does not count in public, because it is not done for payment. By lack of her own income the housewife is economically dependent. Without building up a relationship of her own to the outside world, the self-respect of a housewife is dependent on the professional success of her husband and on the success of her children in school.

Since they are left alone with the responsibility of educating the children, women are very often affected by difficulties in this area. Values and norms are in a process of change. The social environment has become complicated and hard to understand. Often it is impossible or inadequate to rely on traditions in order to cope with the task of contemporary living. So women feel deeply insecure in what is considered their own affair, that is raising and educating children. Society expects women to concentrate on this task, and at the same time they lack the contacts, orientation and self-respect to fulfill it. Thus, very often women regard it as their own failure when their children don't succeed. The overall situation is that women have to cope with many of the problems caused by a production- and efficiency oriented society without even knowing it or being prepared for it.

Women also experience insecurity with respect to their own role as women. They are confronted with competing concepts of the role of women. The difficulty of this situation weighs very much on the individual woman. Discrimination against women in the areas of economy, politics and education is often justified by referring to the natural role of women as mothers and housewives. At the same time, the economy depends on women as a labor force. Women have to learn to deal actively with this situation. We need a change in values which will replace the concept of fixed roles by a flexibility oriented to life. Each individual woman has to learn how to plan her life and how to make decisions according to her situation and her abilities without being pressured by oppressing and competing expectations. This, however, cannot happen without the abolition of open discrimination.

A change will help especially those groups of women which have to cope with special difficulties:

- Women fulfilling the double task of being responsible for a family and having a job. Very often they suffer emotionally and physically from coping with too many expectations.
- Single, widowed and divorced women who suffer from subtle discrimination and sometimes economic problems.
- 1,3 million women who live alone and raise children. They have to make money and raise their children at the same time. Many of them have to cope with emotional and economic difficulties.
- Women who have become pregnant against their will and who mostly have to carry the burden alone.

These groups of women need help to help themselves. They need support by counselling, education, training, physical rehabilitation, preventive health care, women's support groups.

Moreover, men have to learn how to be responsible for the household and the children. Men also suffer from a restrictive role concept. Their life is a partial one as long as it confines them to the working world. They suffer from stress symptoms often without realizing the connection between these and the male role concept. There is a need to develop new styles of partnership and family life in order to make the common life of women and men more human.

Women participate more actively in the life of the church than men. They are the majority of those who attend worship services. In the local parishes they carry out a variety of social services. As to the participation of women in leadership and responsible positions, the church is scarcely different from society. The representation of women is completely inadequate. Since 1975, women can be ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and they can serve as parish ministers. The number of ordained women is still low, of course. The number of women serving on local parish councils is increasing. Beyond the local level, women are lacking or almost

lacking in the governing councils of the church and as leaders and members of the church boards and commissions. The issue is how to make use of the variety of talents which women have and how to broaden the narrow restriction of women to the areas of serving, nursing and collecting. The task is to open up all professions and functions in the church for women and men and to enable women to take over leading positions. Although they are church members, many women have lost any close contact with the church. Often, they don't feel that there is understanding of their special situation (see above) by the church. They have not learned to hear and understand the Gospel in such a way as to relate it to their individual life and their specific problems. The church must try to meet the needs of women in its proclamation and its social work, and must direct the shape of its community towards the real life of people. There is a general striving for material security in our society. The church must try to see beyond this and recognise the search for a sense of life, for justice, for dignity and humanity. Only in this way can women discover the relationship between the Christian faith and their lives. The ordination of women has been an important step. Beyond that, all women have to be seen as fully responsible members of God's people.

The goals of Evangelical women's work are dictated by the mandate of the Gospel and by the situation of women:

- to enable women to find their own solutions for their problems
- to unfold their talents
- to clarify their own role as women
- to express their faith
- to engage themselves in the outside world
- to understand the economic and political context, especially of worldwide problems
- to live creatively and responsibly

As an organization, Evangelical women's work has the continuous task of studying and interpreting the situation of women and to be an advocate for women towards the church and the public. In the theological field there is at present the task of examining theological language in terms of its relationship to women, and of undertaking theological research on the one hand in order to understand emancipation and self-realization, and on the other hand to understand service and diaconia.

The Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Deutschland is the national association of Evangelical women's organizations in the Federal Republic of Germany. Women's organizations have contact with public institutions and secular women's organizations. There is cooperation in a variety of associations and common efforts. Internationally, there are contacts with the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the International World Day of Prayer Committee, the World YWCA, WUCWO and women's organizations in various countries.

The ordination of women to church ministry which has become legal in all German Lutheran Churches is making a difference in the consciousness of men and women. The basic individual qualities of men and women are acknowledged brought out clearly. This necessary step must not prevent us from considering the situation of all women as members of God's people. All women have to come of age theologically and also have to make their contribution in order to help proclamation of the Gospel to become meaningful to all people and all creation. This cannot happen while they set themselves apart, while they do not express what liberation in the Gospel means to them and how it relates to their situation. Women have to learn to speak out and to ensure that people listen to the voice of their experience. Many women have special knowledge of the basic needs of humankind. They know what a child needs to grow up. They know much about the importance of economic conditions for a decent life. They know how a person's mind and self-respect cannot grow without the feeling of being loved and respected. Thus, women can make their special contribution to transform the language of proclamation, to develop communicative ways of worship and to relate the Gospel to the wholeness of life as Jesus did. Also they must help the church to look at its own patriarchal structure, which hampers the church in fulfilling its mission. The church can hardly be a witness for Christ the servant if in its membership there is a fundamental and structural split between dominant and servant groups.

Women have to work beside men for a world where there is more peace, justice and hope. I think, however, that women have a special responsibility. Becoming aware of their own situation should make them conscious of oppression and injustice in other places. I think that liberation is a process which can lead to increased solidarity. This is true especially for the liberating power of the Gospel. Thus, women in our country should increase their efforts to work against discrimination prejudices, to stress the urgency of a new international economic order and a new lifestyle including family-life. They should speak up for groups which are discriminated against and they should increase their influence on educational and decision-making processes.

I think that women could do a lot for education for peace. They could help to demonstrate that change must not be destructive for those who give up privileges. A new creative relationship between women and men could be a sign for reconciliation. Thus, men and women have to seek realization of the new community in Christ.

Helga Hiller

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria, FRG

Basically, there are two types of women's organizations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria. On the local level, there are women's groups which are open to all women in the congregations. These groups do not normally have a membership structure. In this sense women in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria are not organized formally. On the regional and territorial level, there are organizations and agencies doing educational and social work with women and furthering their interests.

Organizations and agencies which are involved in women's work have joined to form the Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Bayern. This association is to be understood as a loose federation. The individual organizations working on a territorial level are basically independent and represent themselves within the church structure.

Evangelical women's work is not part of the church structure and there is no department for women's work. Most women's organizations, however, are associated with the Evangelical Church in Bavaria. The "Bayerischer Mütterdienst" of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as the largest women's organization relating to most local groups is associated with the Church and receives part of its budget from it. Other agencies are part of the Church structure e.g. the women's work of the Board of Industrial Mission (Amt für Industrie- und Sozialarbeit).

On the local level, there are women's groups in many parishes. They meet to discuss questions of their personal life and faith, and issues of church and society. In these groups, women can find contacts and orientation. As a center of ecumenical community and openness towards women all over the world, the

the World Day of Prayer plays an important part. Women's groups often take over practical and organizational tasks at events involving the entire congregation. They also care for people with special needs.

The Bayerischer Mütterdienst as a central women's organization works in the following fields: Training and further education of leaders of women's groups (courses and consultations); family life education (education for partnership and education of children, practical courses, consumer education); "Müttergenesungsarbeit" (rest and recreation periods of 4 weeks for mothers in 5 houses preventive and activating health education, counselling and group work); integration help for immigrants from Eastern European countries; publications for women's work including a devotional series as well as a series on the situation of Third World countries.

Other activities of Evangelical women's organizations in Bavaria are: courses and special services for pastor's wives, for women industrial workers and for women in jobs and professions. The associations of deaconesses, women theologians and women parish workers represent the interest of these groups who are working for the church professionally.

On a national level the German World Day of Prayer Committee, the office of which is at Stein, reaches all Christian women's organizations in Germany. Besides furthering local activities, the Committee sponsors women's self help projects all over the world.

Helga Hiller

My "experiences" refer to discussions with colleagues, working in Women's Work and to a time when I worked in a church community. In youth work, many questions arising pertained to young women.

We still acknowledge that the discussion on emancipation and partnership must be continued, in society as well as in church. Within the younger generation, this discussion is led more as a matter of course. However, declining tendencies are also noted.

- As far as jobs are concerned, the same conditions do not apply to men and women, for equal work (i.e. wages, salaries). Recently, special problems arose with the rising unemployment rate.
- Women must work "more" or "better" to be considered "equal"
- There are only a few women in leading positions. Leading functions are exercised only in a limited way and are not offered on an equal basis.

- The same holds true in church parliaments i.e. the synods. Women are only gradually gaining representation in the councils of church elders.
- Up to now, distinct limitations were placed upon women in church as far as professional opportunities are concerned. In Bavaria, the question of women pastors has finally been concluded after a long discussion. We have not been able to solve the problem of qualified pedagogic theological education for women since the closing of the parish worker seminar in Stein.

The difficulties or problems of women become apparent, whenever questions arise which conflict with the traditional role expectations.

At a seminar for lay staff members, women expressed their problem as follows: In many cases they fail in their attempt to re-enter their profession, and especially those women around 40 feel there is discrimination against them. Often the opportunities diminish to the extent that the husband is engaged in a profession which places demands on him and he cannot show consideration for the professional wishes of his wife. The present situation in the labor market offers little chance of part-time work.

Target groups in Women's Work are the following:

- Volunteer church workers
- Young women
- Women with children
- Single, widowed and divorced women with or without children
- Working women

Methods of work depend upon the individual groups, but the main focus is on social and educational work.

According to the target group, the goals are:

"self-determination" - working on problems according to the phase of life: i.e. marriage, family, problems of child rearing, being single, the aging process, living out biblical testimony in practical life? "Living responsibly" - forms of life style, diaconic mission, orienting one's self in this world.

The activities of women groups in our parishes are:

- arranging of community and children's festivities
- organizing of bazaar with handicrafts for various charity purposes (third world mission, handicapped people, kindergarten) and financing some aspects of parish work
- to conduct the World Day of Prayer and events connected with it.
- help for children of migrant workers (i.e. home work)
- children's groups
- work in senior citizen clubs
- parish visiting service, hospital visiting service
- home nursing station, neighbourhood help

Women should occupy themselves with communicative forms of proclamation, with handling of their questions and problems in the context of biblical testimony. They should stand up for the underprivileged people mentioned in the gospel and for the underprivileged people of our own era and society. Women should not isolate themselves with their own problems but should search for partners who are willing to cooperate to bring about positive changes. Women should become aware of their role and should put this awareness in the context of the gospel. Proclamation should not be limited to "special areas" but should take place in all areas in which women live, work and are involved: family, job, church, society, etc.

In a world in which the rational thinking of an industrialized society becomes progressively more widespread, the area of feelings and emotions should not be excluded. Women should make use of more communicative ways of solving problems in their areas. They should work in committees and should try to find solutions for common problems even if it may seem difficult at times.

Evangelical Lutheran Church

in Brunswick, FRG

There are women groups in almost all parishes of our Landeskirche. They see themselves as the action groups of protestant women in our church. They are open for women of all ages and sections of the population.

The individual groups form 11 regional associations and the 'Stadtverband'. These local and regional groups are again consolidated in the 'Landesverband der Evangelischen Frauenhilfe Braunschweig e.V.'.

Over and above these there are mother groups and discussion circles that work together with the Landesverband. All groups are closely connected with the Evangelical Lutheran Landeskirche in Braunschweig, their dioceses and parishes.

All work is done on a voluntary basis, on local, regional and national level. The Landesverband performs the following tasks on behalf of its members :

It maintains contacts with local groups through visits and circulars, grants initial help for newly formed groups, conducts seminars for volunteers, gives suggestions for leaders of senior groups, maintains contact and cooperation with the Landeskirche and its departments and cooperates on general church matters with other secular and church associations.

Besides this, the Landesverband conducts seminars and courses for mothers, parents or grandparents together with their children or grandchildren. Themes are selected from education, theology, society and politics; but courses are also held to further talents and recreational activities. For senior citizens there are meetings where they are encouraged to reflect in order to help cope with the aging process. There are also meetings

for the lonely, with information of general interest, on health, religion and relevant law questions.

Discussion groups are offered to open-minded women in the city taking themes from various areas of life and science.

The Evangelische Frauenhilfe conducts four-week rest cures for mothers at its own convalescent home.

Neighbourhood assistance is undertaken through a home nursing station within the area of the city. Nurses are provided for families with old or sick people, and are advised by professionals.

The Evangelische Frauenhilfe maintains contacts with protestant women's organizations in several European countries and celebrates the "World Day of Prayer" with Christian women all over the world. It also supports mission work.

Special consideration within women's work is given to structural changes in ethical and social spheres. Topics being given special attention range from marriage, family planning, child rearing, education, definition of property, "limitations of growth", and the rapid change of life circumstances. There is concern about general secularization which in turn creates resignation, and difficulties in witnessing for the gospel. Some of these difficulties are conditioned by the generation turnover.

There have not hitherto been many women in leading church positions. However, with appropriate educational measures, this will be changed.

One of the aims of the Frauenhilfe is to broaden the view of women for various walks in life and also to help them to accept in an independent way the roles which are necessary at present.

Renate Apitz

SERVICE FOR WORKING WOMEN AT BRAUNSCHWEIG

The Service for working Women, as a branch of Women's Work, exists in almost all Landeskirchen of the Federal Republic of Germany. Within our Landeskirche, this work is being undertaken by one full-time and 2 part-time employees.

Target groups of our service are:

- a) Single and divorced working women between the ages of 30 and 60.
- b) Working mothers
- c) Retired women of the above groups.

All these groups have their individual problems, and it is our aim to help them to cope with these problems.

- a) In many cases single or divorced women of the middle class have found their set place in working life, thereby strengthening their self-confidence. In order to achieve recognition, however, much greater efforts must be made than in the case of men. The life they have to lead is in most cases on the periphery of our social structure. It is not yet common to invite single women to social functions, etc. There is no partner available to think over and talk about private problems. They live isolated and lonely and are only recognized through their working achievements. (This also applies to a great extent to group c)
- b) Apart from the above, help and advice on child upbringing is given to a group of single and divorced mothers.

The following programs serve the above aims:

- 1. Weekend seminars and meetings (topics from religious and ethical spheres)
- 2. Vacation communities

3. Lecture and discussion evenings
4. Festivities
5. Discussion groups with free selection of topics
6. Individual counselling

In cooperation with the Frauenhilfe, our Service conducts courses for parish secretaries and women church elders.

The leaders of this organisation meet annually (Arbeitskonferenz der Leiterinnen der evangelischen Berufstätigenarbeit) for an exchange about our work during the year, and to deliberate on new working methods and themes.

In my opinion, the realization of general priesthood is valid for women as well as for men. In her own position every women should try not only to be a professional but also to be a human being. As a human, she should be able to recognize responsibility for herself as well as others, and to be ready to help wherever necessary. With this concept she will be in accordance with the Gospel and will play her part in the development of a human society.

Elisabeth Priess

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover, FRG

In the Lutheran Church of Hanover (LCH = Ev.-luth. Landeskirche Hannover) there are about 4 million members, half of them being women. All activities for these women are combined in the Department for Women's Work (Frauenwerk) of the LCH.

Women's work is headed by an ordained woman, Gesa Conring, with a staff of 3 assistant executives (for theological education, cultural education and administration) and 5 secretaries, all of them full-time. LCH being subdivided into 8 districts (Sprengel), there is a female full-time advisor working in each district. Furthermore, there are voluntary women's commissioners in charge of the districts. The most important voluntary woman is the consultant for questions of the laity of LCH. She is elected for 6 years.

Areas of concern of the Women's Work

1. In general: cooperation with other departments of LCH
2. Areas of special concern to women
 - 2.1 general training of voluntary workers on parish, district and LCH-level.
 - 2.2 sending instructors to the parishes - on request - to speak about exegesis, civics, problems of abortion, parents' rights with respect to school education, modern literature, etc.
 - 2.3 care of special women's groups such as
seminars for mothers and small children,
discussion of educational problems,

meetings with employed women,
seminars for farmer's wives.

2.4 Preparing women for the position of church elder
or membership of the church council.

2.5 Cooperation with other organisations of Protestant women, such as
German Protestant Women's League
Protestant sororities
Unions of Protestant female educators, nurses, visiting nurses,
kindergarten teachers, etc.

2.6 Cooperation with further women's leagues united by the Lower
Saxony's Women's Council. There are very good contacts with the
Catholic Women's League, the Farmers' Wives Association and the
German Housewives' League.

"We intend to promote women's work mainly within the parishes", Gesa
Conring says of the programme of LCH's Women's Work. "We try to make
women think about their position within their family, profession, and
society, make them aware of their place in this world. They should be
willing to involve themselves in their parish and their society, and
they should be able to accept some responsibility. We are aiming at the
autonomous women."

Christa Volkmann-Schläger

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldenburg, FRG

There are different types of women's groups in nearly all the congregations of the Oldenburg church. This means that women belonging to a congregation meet separately in addition to other activities like Sunday service, bible study, senior clubs, etc. They often attend those activities together with their husbands. There are some congregations with special men's groups, but women's groups exist almost everywhere even if there is no men's group. Women obviously want meetings of their own. Other members of the congregations, mostly the younger ones, reject such meetings where men and women are separated. To their mind this is artificial in our society where men and women live, work and worship together.

On the one hand women are organized in the "Evangelische Frauenhilfe", they pay the membership fees and attend the general meetings. On the other hand, women meet without any formal organization as women's and mothers' groups. In many congregations there are mixed groups: organized women meet together with the ordinary free women's group. In a few congregations there are special women's groups of the "Gustav-Adolf-Verein". The local group of the "Deutsche evangelische Frauenbund e.V." meets in the city of Oldenburg.

To promote the work of women in the church a post was created where a woman pastor coordinates all the activities. She visits several groups and plans and organizes training courses for the leaders. Because of the general shortage of finances there is a danger of this position being cancelled.

Usually women's work in a local congregation has very little relation and contact to other congregations at the same place. In any region it is the only training of lay people (leadership), activities for "Müttergenesung" and the services for Women's World Day of Prayer which are undertaken jointly. Apart from this one theological secretary for women's work, there are no

other full-time workers. But in many congregations the pastor takes care of the women's group as well as all the other groups. One woman from this group is called the leader, but is not paid for the job. Her "salary" is only a free training course from time to time.

Where younger women meet they mostly discuss educational problems because these questions are still handled only by mothers in many families. The meetings of the older women, mostly widows, are used as a means against loneliness and isolation and as a possibility to get in contact with people and to be informed about faith and Christian life.

One goal of whole women's work today is to make people more conscious of the social question in their society and to promote social activities in their respective groups. Another goal is to enable women to join the church council and to be trained in discussion and public speech. A special social and financial help for churches in diaspora is given by the women group of "Gustav-Adolf-Werk".

There are some contacts with Switzerland and the Netherlands and through the "Gustav-Adolf-Werk" also to many other countries. Thus the ecumenical dimension of all church activities is not forgotten.

Looking at the New Testament I can see no special role of women with regard to the proclamation of the Gospel. With regard to the German situation - maybe only the Oldenburg one - this question seems to have been left by a period of struggle for the emancipation of women which is now out in Asia, Africa and Latin America. But I doubt if there is a solution for "sexism" by looking for a "feministic" theology.

The contribution of women to human development in our western society should consist in carefully avoiding the use of the possibilities for emancipation in a new struggle against men in order not to replace one oppression by another.

The presupposition of human development is the true and real human being according to the example of Jesus Christ. We still exist as men and women, but no longer as competitors but as partners, knowing that we need each other.

Annette Nuber

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Schleswig-Holstein, FRG

The women in the church in Schleswig-Holstein are not usually members of a formal organisation. There are interest and topic groups in local parishes. Also there are individual groups which belong to the organisation Frauenhilfe (Inc.)-women's aid.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Schleswig-Holstein has a special branch for women's work which is fully integrated within the regional church structure.

The above mentioned "Landeskirchliche Frauenwerk", hereafter referred to as 'women's work' is an independent service outside the parish structure. It has its own place within the financial and administrative framework of the Schleswig-Holstein Church, but retains its own character, which is the result of its internal organisation and specific working methods. The women's work is organised at all levels, from the central organisation for Schleswig-Holstein itself down to the local parish level. Leaving aside a certain dependence on the Schleswig-Holstein Church, particularly in financial matters, there is a great deal of freedom in this structure. We are open for all groups and problems. Every type of traditional and experimental open church work is within our scope. - One of the main pillars is the parish. Practically every parish has a women's group, mostly run by voluntary workers. The vicar's wife plays an important role in activating the women's groups within the parishes. All the voluntary helpers have the opportunity to attend instructional courses at local and regional levels.

There is a person with special responsibility for women's work in practically every local area. She invites specific teams and their leaders from the parishes to regular meetings, offers further instruction and arranges courses. This is done in cooperation and under the general organisation

of the central headquarters.

The basic organisation (e.g. salaries, running costs, etc.) is financed from church taxes. However, the actual work is only made possible by the activity of many voluntary workers. At parish and local levels, the enthusiasm shown for women's problems and concerns is still largely a matter for the individual worker and her patience and imagination. For her the central organisation is a major help and supporter.

The central organisation is headed by a female theologian. There are two further clerical posts which are filled by a man and a woman, both with pastoral training, who have special fields of responsibility. There is also a graduate psychologist (female), and 14 full-time employees, including two female social workers and three women responsible for adult education.

Problems in our society continue to be the problems of education, the concerns of the working women and the isolation of the women at home, exhaustion through too many responsibilities, the problem of bringing up children, and family questions. The women feel that neither their paid work nor their unpaid work in the family and at home is highly enough valued.

To a large extent the church reflects the problems of society. The conflict in which every woman finds herself becomes clearer here as the church slowly develops a new understanding of the role of women. Most women's groups show a desire for change and for more real responsibility and participation. Just as in public life, it is difficult for women in the church to gain responsibility within the ecclesiastical organisation (committees, synod). Also the women are still not certain whether they can take on the extra load of public responsibility.

The goal can be largely deduced from what has been previously stated. We try to make women ready to take a mature part in questions of faith, within their own lives, as participants in family and adult instruction and as members of counselling groups. The groups themselves are developing a wish for practical work, for socially worthwhile activities, for service within the parish. However, especially within groups of younger women we find the wish to develop their own responsibilities and potential as active Christians.

The importance of the role played by women in the church is not so much a question of strictly organised activities, but comes more through the multiplicity of the groups and their work. They are more ready than men to develop new topics and to take the initiative to engage themselves actively in the various areas. One facet of this is the World Day of Prayer, which they organise themselves for the most part. Every year new "World Prayer" parishes are created. The support for holidays for mothers in need of recuperation is almost totally female. Women are ready to take up most of

the "service" posts in the parishes, in fact they are its backbone. Yet this service is far too readily taken for granted.

Our external contacts are the following:

- a) Contact with the Lutheran Women's Work as an umbrella organisation.
- b) Study courses with Scandinavian women, particularly Swedes.
- c) Connections through conferences and speakers, mostly at the central level.

Proclamation of the Gospel also occurs in practical activities. In the face of a materialistic and achievement-oriented world, proclamation through action undertakes tasks which can neither be fully measured nor properly esteemed. Here it is the women who show more readiness and resoluteness to stand as Christians and to talk about their faith. We women should still be even more prepared to accept this freedom to proclaim a living faith and so bring new life into the established church. In my opinion this is the most essential contribution that women can make to a more human development: they should not themselves accept the goals of a materialistic society, but try to show what actually makes life worth living, and to fill it with a constant striving for peace.

Sieghilde Hoerschelmann

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg, FRG

The women of our Landeskirche meet in women's groups, mothers' groups and young women's groups. One or more of these groups exist in almost every parish. Membership does not involve obligation and no membership fees are paid.

These groups are represented at the Landeskirche through the "Evangelische Frauenhilfe". All other women's organizations within the Landeskirche in Württemberg ("Frauenhilfe", "Bahnhofsmmission", "Diakonissenhäuser", "Theologinnenverband", etc., in all 31 organizations) are consolidated in the "Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Württemberg".

The Oberkirchenrat, the managing body of the Landeskirche, does not have its own women's department. All women's questions are represented by various other departments.

The women's organizations are independent, but are financed by the Landeskirche.

Women's groups in the parishes are consolidated at regional level. Representatives are elected here to be sent to the state conference, which in turn is a member of the Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Deutschland.

Grass root work at the Frauenhilfe is performed mainly through volunteers, only the chairwoman works with regular staff.

Women in our society are interested and involve themselves in matters of schooling and work in parents' councils. Work is therefore mainly limited to the social sector of our society.

Church women are

- the majority of the service participants
- very much engaged in the activities of the parishes
- to a lesser extent engaged in the theological processes.

Women in our church do not so much have planned goals, but rather seek possibilities for biblical orientation and the experience of community through evening gatherings. They are also interested in discussions of vital questions. Occasionally these groups initiate action to recognise and accept responsibility in church and society.

The following are some of the parish activities:

- Bazaars for designated purposes
- Senior Citizen work, care and help for foreign laborers and their families
- Ecumenical contacts, especially through meetings in connection with the World Day of Prayer.

On the regional level, work is undertaken in resettlement homes for people from the Eastern European countries and in homes for the disabled.

The women's work of the Landeskirche is engaged in the following activities:

- Seminar on selected problems of our society, ie. reform of marriage law, questions of schooling, new life styles
- An educational week for young non-working mothers
- Political meetings on topics such as foreign aid politics, reform of social security benefits
- Courses to inform women church elders about questions and problems of church life, and to assist them in their work in male dominated organizations.

Through membership in the Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Deutschland contact is being maintained with women's organizations of other Landeskirchen. International contacts exist through visits arranged by the World Day of Prayer committee and through mission contacts.

Direct ecumenical contacts result from the World Day of Prayer on the local level, but also on regional level. Contacts between the various denominations are also maintained at the State Church Level.

Women also are "co-heirs of the grace". They live through the grace of the gospel, therefore are also witnesses of the gospel. Proclamation of the gospel is a part of this duty and it is only through historic development this has been exercised only by men. Before God, women have the same pre-suppositions as men, for proclaiming the gospel.

The process of emancipation is necessary in many areas, but most especially

in view of the co-responsibility to be carried by the women in all matters of human society and development.

The action of women in Ireland is an important experience for the women in all the world. Contributions by women are needed peace in politics and in politics in general. Interests of women should not be limited to "social" areas, for questions of economics and finance are also part of their responsibility. In short, there is no area which does not require the responsibility of women.

Erika Stoeffler

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, GDR

The Church Women's Work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony is formally organized and is part of the church structure. At our church headquarters we have the church office for women's work (or Ministry for Church Women's Work). Women's work is organized on local, regional and national levels.

The leadership of women's work in Saxony consists of :

1. Full-time staff
 - a) leading team of three persons: 2 theologians (one woman, one man),
one lay-woman
 - b) 8 programme secretaries (women) who visit the various church districts to prepare and train voluntary leaders for their work with and among women, and to visit women in the parishes.
2. Part-time staff
 - a) 5 programme secretaries (doing the same work as the full-time staff)
 - b) 3 assistants for recreation weeks for mothers
3. Volunteers
 - a) 33 leaders in the districts for work with and among women
 - b) 25 leaders with special assignments to work with mothers.

A particular problem of women in our society is that women face the difficult situation of having to combine the demands of their task in their families, in professional life and their tasks as citizens.

With regard to women's problems in the church, it has to be realized that women have the same mandate as men as well as the same rights. This is already better realized on the local level than on the higher levels of the church structure.

The goals set for the women's work in our church are the following:

- to improve the knowledge of the Holy Bible
- to help parents (mothers) to educate their children in order to master their lives as Christians
- to help women realize their responsibility as Christians in church and society.

The activities of women's work on parish and district levels consist of social services (such as aiding aged people and handicapped children), of Bible study, and of organizing meetings in order to discuss common problems.

Our women's organization co-operates on the national level with the Union of Evangelical Churches in the German Democratic Republic and on the international level with the World Day of Prayer.

With regard to proclamation, women should play an active part in the family as well as in society.

Women should also help to strengthen the responsibility of people towards peace education, against discrimination of other groups of people or races and towards protection of the world against environmental pollution and other men-made catastrophies.

Irene Koenig

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thuringia, GDR

The women in our church have no independent organization of their own. In the church women's work comes under a special department - the Women's Department. As a department of the Evangelical Lutheran Church its activity is the direct reflection of the church and its congregations. The appointment of executives in this department, as well as the activities of its leaders, needs approval of the territorial church council. At present one woman theologian and three women workers travel around within the Women's Department in Thuringia.

It is not possible for us to be organized and the church departments are forbidden to have membership lists or to raise funds. The functions, for which invitations are issued on the local and regional level, are open to all congregation members and are a part of the congregation's work.

The territorial leadership is undertaken by full-time workers, and the congregation groups are led partly by full-time congregation workers (pastors, women helpers, catechists) and partly also by honorary workers from the congregation. Equality is ensured by law. Often, however, women are overburdened by their profession, their family and by housekeeping, since the centuries-old fixed distribution of roles has not yet been broken down in general consciousness.

The state of partnership between men and women where they have equal rights and duties is achieved in their profession, but must still be put in practice in the context of household and family.

Although the congregation present at Sunday services consists mainly of women, they have little right of participation. They are used to the fact that they are taken care of by the church and are rarely interested in taking leading positions. Full-time women workers are accepted, but it is very noticeable that there are scarcely any of them in the decision-making committees within the

church. It is particularly serious when we have to observe that women in church circles adhere strictly to the rigid traditions. They will not allow themselves to be questioned critically, to listen to the enquiries those who think differently, or to enter into discussion. The responsibility of lay people must be strengthened by means of greater right of participation and considered critically both where church and society are concerned. Support would need to be given to women's own faith and in the witness of faith in family and society, as well as help with the special problems encountered by single or married women, in profession and family.

In many congregations the women are responsible for and are organizing the Women's World Day of Prayer. In many congregations women regularly attend Bible studies and congregational evenings. Diaconic activities are often initiated by the women, such as training of old people's nurses in the congregation.

There are joint conferences with workers in other territorial churches of the DDR and occasional contacts with women's organizations in the German Federal Republic, as well as with workers of the women's departments in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Other ecumenical contacts are looked after by the central office of women's aid in Potsdam.

Since Christian education for children is becoming more and more difficult, the spreading of the Gospel must be the responsibility of their parents. Women must be prepared for this. In proclaiming the Gospel by word and deed there can really be no difference between man and woman.

Through their growing self-awareness women could critically question the working and professional world which men have made so one-sided. And while they fight against tutelage they will also be watchful of those levels of society which need special protection (such as old or handicapped people, children, etc.).

Hildegard Bechmann

Church of Norway

The women in the Church of Norway are not organized formally, although they form the majority in the congregations, and most of the practical, economic and missionary work is carried out by them. Some figures from 1974 show the female representation in the elected bodies of our church :

- Congregation council (Menighetsrad): on an average 45%
(In comparison we find 15% municipal, female representation)
- Regional church council (Bispedømmerad -10) on an average 20%
(one of five members)
- The church council (Kirkeraadet) : approximately 23%
(three of thirteen members)

In Norway we have in addition several voluntary, mainly missionary, organizations. Most of the 17000 voluntary missionary groups are women groups, and the majority of Norwegian missionaries serving abroad are women. (See Lutheran World vo. 23/76 no.2, p. 142) But the second largest missionary society, the Norwegian Lutheran Mission, does not allow women to vote at the general assemblies and they are not eligible for its executive committee. In the largest missionary society, however, the women gained voting rights at the beginning of this century. (The women gained the vote in Norway in 1913) A few Christian organizations have a majority of women in their central board, for example : The Norwegian Seamen's Mission.

In general we find that female participation in the central decision-making organs is in no way representative.

The writer is a member of a Christian ecumenical organization working for equal rights for women and men in home, church and society. We see the church as our main working area. The organization was founded in 1974 and at present has only groups in the biggest cities. Most of its members belong to the Church of Norway.

Since about 1970 the newer women's liberation organizations have been working in Norway. These groups are dominated by intellectual educated women (as are the similar Christian groups). Their main concrete political aim and cause is free abortion. They also try to change the attitudes of people and especially women, towards the traditional sex roles. Together with other women's organizations, the political women's groups and the labour organization, they work for equal pay, more work for women, more kindergartens, better insurance rights for women and improvement of rights in connection with pregnancy, delivery and nursing.

Women in the church are of course interested in the problems mentioned above. Most of them, however, are against free abortion. I myself took part as one of the leaders of a campaign in 1974/75 against the new, very liberal abortion law. (In about three weeks 610 000 people signed a manifesto against this law.)

In the congregations the women usually form the majority in most of the activities. But especially the diakonia and the work among children are carried out by the women. I am myself interested in work among the children and have taken part in it for some years. In addition the women do a lot of fund raising work, usually for the local church activities and the mission. Besides taking part in the usual services the women have mission, Bible study and prayer groups.

Last year a new law was passed concerning the kindergartens. Like the abortion law, this was really controversial, because it does not state that kindergartens should be based upon Christian principles (like schools). But the parents and the municipal authorities can decide to have such a basis. Christian women have engaged themselves both in the debate and in the work for a Christian basis for the local kindergartens.

In these days we are discussing particularly the relationship between the state and the church. The abortion and the kindergarten laws have convinced many that we should have a free church rather than a state church. One of the Norwegian bishops retired in protest against the new abortion law.

Women and men have the same responsibility for proclamation of the Gospel. It is therefore important that more women have a theological education and are ordained as ministers. It is also important that lay women take part in the decision-making process at all levels in the church in a representative way. The church preaches about justice and equality, but at the same time the church structure reflects the opposite. I think that this is such a serious problem that in the end it could prevent people from believing. We therefore have to work hard to change this situation. In the Norwegian church this question is unfortunately still a controversial subject.

In my opinion human development is largely controlled by the economy and the political authorities. It is therefore important that as many women as possible go into politics. As a first step in this direction the women have to have the same education and professional competence as men. A larger percentage of female participation will come from almost every area of society. It is therefore important that Christian women are qualified to take part in the governing of development, and that they do not just leave it to their non-Christian "sisters".

I think that the special experience of women is necessary for a more human development, in the sense that development has also to be adjusted to women's lives. I think also that women can contribute to a more human development because they usually have closer relationship with life and death. They have the responsibility for bringing new life into the world and they usually take care of the children and the old people. But since women as well as men are sinners I think that the best guarantee for a human development is Christian love and stewardship. As Christian women we have the responsibility for making these principles influence political decisions.

Elise Klouman Bekken

Church of Sweden

In the Church of Sweden you will find women working and taking part in all activities of the church. Almost every parish has one or two workgroups interested in and supporting foreign mission, social work in the parish, etc. Some, but not all, form a special organization, Sveriges Kyrkliga Kvinnorad (Board of Women's Work in the Church of Sweden). In some dioceses the women have chosen to have a formal organization, in others the diocese council elects a group of women with special responsibility for the work among women.

Many women also take part in mixed studygroups, Bible studies, choral singing, etc., in the parish.

In many parishes with a large population of young people, you can find special activities directed towards mothers with small children. A parish worker talks with the mothers, while helpers look after the children.

Sveriges Kyrkliga Kvinnorad is voluntarily associated with the church. The work is organized on local, regional and national levels. The most important part of the work is done on a regional (diocese) level.

On the national level the organization has a part-time staffperson. In some dioceses there are also part-time staffpersons, but not in all.

In different church offices on national and diocese levels there are a lot of women employed, but not specially for work among women.

The general policy - if you can speak of such a thing in this context - is that different programs should be directed mainly to both men and women.

In 1976 there were about 210 women ministers serving in different positions in the church. Some are in charge of a parish, but we are still waiting for the first woman dean or bishop. At the theological faculties in the universities about one third of the students are women.

More than 700 women are working as deaconess with different kinds of social work in the parishes. About two thirds of the Swedish missionaries who work with sister churches in Africa and Asia are women.

There are many non-organized women workers, and it is impossible to estimate the exact number. They are primarily engaged in work among children (Sunday Schools, weekday activities for boys and girls), youth activities and work in women's groups. More than half the teachers giving religious instruction in the state schools are women.

The female representation in the elected bodies of the church is the following:

- congregational council board about one quarter
- diocese church council about one fifth
- the four national boards about one quarter

During the last ten years there has been strong pressure to have more women involved in the decision-making bodies. The pressure was first directed towards the political structures, then towards labour unions, and now it starts in the church.

It is necessary to get more women involved in the decision-making in the church, and Kvinnoradet has, therefore, decided to start a special study on this. They will work with the theme of Participation of Women in the Church during the next few years. Groups will be studying specially prepared material and will discuss opportunities, participation in the decision-making, etc.

Another question that still is a burning matter is the situation of the ordained women. The law allowing the ordination of women was passed in 1958. But at that time it was said that no bishop had to ordain women should it be against his belief. This has created the situation of an ongoing discussion about the ordination of women. Some women ministers have problems with male colleagues in nearby parishes, etc. One diocese is still closed for women also.

A general concern for the church of Sweden is the problem to reach out to the modern person, especially in the cities. Many people regard the church as part of the state establishment, not as a proclinator of good news. There is also the problem of communication: how to translate the ancient message of the living God to make it understandable to a secular person. Many people are desperately looking for a meaning in life, but they don't look to the church for it.

It is difficult to state a specific goal for the women's organization.

In many ways it is trying to be a channel through which the Gospel can reach the women. So perhaps it can be stated something like this: To help women find the meaning of the Gospel, to experience its strength in their lives, and to live it out to others.

For a number of years the women's organization has been working with various themes. One is loneliness - and how to tackle it. Another is the situation of people who have just lost a family member, friend, etc. For the coming years the organization will concentrate on the participation of women in the church.

One special activity in which many women have been engaged is "u-veckan". This is an ecumenical activity held each year for one week during the month of November. It concentrates on our responsibilities towards the developing world. The various activities during that week include: study-circles, seminars, discussions, workshops, special services. First of all "U-veckan" aimed at increasing people's knowledge of the developing world, the interrelation between the rich and the poor nations, and so on. Then it started a discussion about the implementations in Sweden as a rich industrial country and on our personal lives. The activities in 1976 included a call for change in the Swedish economy, increased aid, a change in trade-terms, and a reduction in the military expenditure.

SPECIAL AREAS OF CONCERN AND PROBLEMS OF WOMEN IN THE SWEDISH SOCIETY

Sweden is a Scandinavian welfare nation, neutral, outside the Common Market, and with a strong pressure for equality between the sexes. Still there is a long way to go before we reach this goal: in Sweden, men and women have the same opportunities and share the same responsibilities. The labour market is still divided into two sections: 80% of women working outside the home are to be found in 25 occupations (out of 300). There is a shortage of facilities for child-care. Women still have the tiring, repetitious and low-paid jobs.

But what to do about it? Staff members in the schools try to push girls towards vocational training, to choose non-traditional training. But so far very little has changed. Girls account for about 95% of those being trained for social services, nursing and child care in secondary school classes. In the classes preparing for jobs in technical fields, the percentage is reversed: 95% boys. So still there is a long way to go before Sweden reaches the goal of equality between the sexes. However, interest in these questions has increased in recent years.

Other areas of concern are:

- 1) The care of children in families, in nurseries and the possibilities for parents to spend more time with their small children. (Together the parents can now get 7 months "maternity-leave". More and more men are using this opportunity to spend a month or two at home with the child.) The political question is if the parents with small children should have the possibility to work only 6 hours a day and have an allowance from the state, covering the salary for the remaining 2 hours.
- 2) The job situation. In certain areas of Sweden it is hard for women

to find work.

- 3) The need to get more women involved in politics and labour unions, especially in higher positions.
- 4) The need to economize the limited resources of the world, nuclear energy and environment.

It is important that women play an active part in the proclamation of the Gospel. Men and women have equal responsibility here, as everywhere else in the church and society. It is not one group or one sex that should have monopoly on proclamation. Both as ordained and as lay-people, women can proclaim the Gospel. The Gospel is given to the whole of humanity.

For human development women have special experiences and competence that should be better used. In one way you can say that women are closer to life itself. More women in decision-making could influence the future of humanity in fields like: quality of life, relation between poor and rich nations, stewardship with limited resources, the use of nuclear power, environment, social and educational policy.

Christina Rogestam

Latin America

Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil

Women in our church are organized formally under "Ordem Auxiliadora de Senhoras Evangélicas" - OASE (Auxiliary Order of Evangelical Women). OASE is a department of our church and voluntarily associated with it. It has its historical origin in movements which, just as in the Mother-Church, started when women organized themselves on congregation level. Organization on synod, on district and regional levels came later. We are now organized on local, district and regional levels. Our four regional departments work closely together, but the national department has not yet been institutionalized. This will happen soon. We have full-time, part-time and voluntary leadership in our women's work.

To have a career and a good job is the interest of a great many women in our society, as well as housekeeping and the education of their children. Many women are involved in social assistance, with their husbands who belong to Rotary, Lions or other institutions.

A great problem for married women is to find maids or efficient helpers for the households. It is also difficult to reconcile housekeeping and the job. Men, generally, do not help with running the home. Many women have to have a job in order to get money for their family. Some others like to work in order to maintain their financial independence or, in many cases, because being a housewife is not fulfilling to them.

In the church they are concerned in cooperating in all avenues of achievement and service of the church. Two main problems are : getting more women to attend the regular weekly or monthly meetings, and that in some congregations and by some ministers women and OASE work are not fully accepted.

Our goals are :

- participation in the maintenance of the congregations
- Raising endowment funds and funds for charity work
- Helping fellow sisters in the family and spiritual life
- Helping wherever and whenever needed

The women meet for Bible study and prayer, for seminars and conventions. They carry out a special service of orientation helping to train other women to make a living or to be more efficient housewives, teaching them cooking, sewing, crocheting or other needlework, and orientation in the education of their children. OASE women are much engaged in movements of social assistance. They also visit and minister to the elderly, the sick and the lonely.

Our national contacts are :

- Participation of leaders in Regional Conventions
- Participation in regular annual board of directors meeting for general evaluation of activities undertaken and planning of new ones.

Our international contacts are :

- Meetings with women from other countries in the form of visits, seminars, etc.

Our ecumenical contacts are :

- Meetings and cooperation in common projects with people from other churches and social assistance organizations

Women as well as men are and can be instruments of the Holy Spirit in the proclamation of the Gospel. We consider it artificial to think here in terms of female and male. Both, man and woman, are human beings, creatures of God, with gifts they put at the service of the Lord, on the basis of cooperation. A woman gives witness of her faith every day in her relationship with her husband and children.

We think women could contribute towards human development in the following ways :

- At home as :
- keepers of the family institution
 - managers of the domestic organization
 - partners
 - mothers
 - educators

In society as :

- a human power
- an element of production and progress
- and in our society especially as a person interested in all areas and forms of work and social assistance

In the church :

- in diaconal work
- in social assistance service
- in the proclamation of the message of the Gospel

We believe the presence of women, side by side with men, can give a more human and free dimension, a more far-reaching, at the same time richer and more cooperative dimension to the task and mission for which all human beings are called.

It is important not to lose sight of the cultural - historical conditioning of a society.

To substitute one mentally for another, apart from being an artificial process, can be dangerous because of its emptiness. It is a shape with no contents.

It is important to see ourselves as human beings, children of God. It is important to be ready, with all our gifts, to be cooperators. It is less important to strike for positions or numerous representation.

Important is to be present and to be a presence.

Lya Wilhelm

Lutheran Church in Guyana

The women of the Lutheran Church in Guyana are formally organized as the Lutheran Church Women. The synodical Lutheran Church Women was founded about 1960 and now has about 14 local units throughout the church.

Women's work is part of the church structure in that the LCW is seen as an auxiliary service unit and makes annual reports to the Convention of the church. This is a voluntary association and there is no department of women's work as such.

The work of the Synodical Lutheran Church Women is organized at the congregational level (local), is then grouped in four district or regional areas and also finds expression as a national unit within the church structure. The synodical LCW is governed by an Executive Committee with a president, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and treasurer as elected officers. These persons plus all chairpersons of the four districts comprise the Executive Committee. In addition, two pastors of the church serve as advisors to the LCW. One is elected by the Lutheran Church in Guyana Executive Council, the other by the Executive Committee of Lutheran Church Women.

At one time the church had full-time parish workers, some of whom were Guyanese, who worked partially with women's activities. Now the only leadership that is undertaken is on a voluntary basis.

Concerns and Problems of Women

In Guyanese society some of the problems that women face are :

1. The necessity of working outside the home: This poses a problem for the rearing of young children as there are not adequate

structures, such as day-care centres to care for children. Sometimes children are cared for through the extended family; otherwise other arrangements have to be made if it is necessary, for economic reasons, for the woman to work. This problem is especially manifest in towns and cities such as Georgetown and New Amsterdam.

2. Educational level of women : There has been a tendency to de-emphasize the full education of women in Guyanese society in the past, especially in the East Indian community. Thus, older women are often barely literate and are limited in terms of job or leisure opportunities. This trend has shifted in recent years and now women are tending to get as much education as men.
3. Relationships with husbands : For many women, whether of African or East Indian or other background, the male has been seen as superior and dominant, while the female is seen as subservient. This varies from community to community, but it is generally a problem. Women find it difficult to seek expression outside the home because of demands and expectations placed on them by men. This has sometimes hindered church activities as well as community and other activities for women.
4. Breast-feeding : Over the years there has been a wide-spread move from breast-feeding among women. Guyanese doctors have expressed concern from a hygienic as well as nutritional point of view. The Ministry of Health has recently carried out a wide-spread breast-feeding encouragement programme.

In the church, the following concerns have shown themselves :

1. The Lutheran Old Folks' Home : This has been the primary project of the Lutheran Church Women and extensive emphasis has been placed on giving of Thank Offerings, visitations, giving food and clothing to the home. The home is substantially financed through the work of LCW.
2. Programme Emphasis : In some congregations there has been a problem in developing an LCW programme that attracts as many women as could be reached. Materials from outside Guyana are not always appropriate and there are few attempts at preparing materials locally, although last year an annual programme series was written and distributed for LCW use. Also in some congregations the programme tends to cater for the middle-to older age group.
3. Lack of organized activity : Many congregations still do not have an active LCW or women's programme. Some of these may have occasional and non-formal activities, but have not come under the programme of the Synodical Lutheran Church Women.

Goals

The primary goal of the Synodical Lutheran Church Women has been to support both by money and presence the Lutheran Old Folks' Home in New Amsterdam, Berbice County. Some local LCW units have attempted to set goals for matters such as new programme ideas, service projects, and

attraction of new and younger members.

Organized / Unorganized Activities

These include Bible studies, handicraft projects, drama, - including full-length plays as well as skits, visitation of women, members who are ill or unable to go out, cases of community need; care for aged by means of provision of food, devotional services and singing; decorating of the church and general preparation of the sanctuary for festive occasions.

Contacts

The Lutheran Church Women have contact nationally through the membership of the Lutheran Church in Guyana in the Guyana Council of Churches which has had a Commission on Women's Work. Ecumenically, many of our women support individually and collectively the various projects of Church Women United which is very active in Guyana.

Role of Women in the Proclamation of the Gospel

In the Lutheran Church in Guyana there are and will continue to be increased ways in which women can be involved in the proclamation of the Gospel both formally and informally. Of course, women already carry out this vocation in their extensive visitation programmes in hospitals, homes for the aged, and convalescent institutions. They discuss the matter of this vocation in everyday life through their jobs outside the home, through community and national structures - both political and economic. Formally, in the structure of the church, women can become ordained pastors and one person has applied for such training; they can become members of the voluntary Diaconate, assist in the distribution of Communion, and preaching and teaching.

Women's Contribution towards Human Development

The following ways are seen as primary in Guyana's Co-operative Socialist Republic : looking after need of the family in the home, participating in community welfare matters; engaging in self-help community projects; teaching in schools; earn income to relieve men of economic burdens; counselling of women concerning marriage and family problems.

Mavis Miller

United States

American Lutheran Church

The American Lutheran Church Women is a part of the Division for Life and Mission in the Congregation within our church structure. We have a programme staff of five people.

We are organized on a national, district, conference and local level :

National ALC Women - comprised of 18 district ALC Women organizations

District ALC Women - comprised of approximately 200 conferences

Conference ALC Women - comprised of approximately 4500 congregational ALC Women organizations.

ALC Women staff consists of the Executive Director, the Director for Education, the Director for Stewardship, the Director for Editorial Processes, and the Editor of SCOPE magazine. They are full-time and salaried.

On the ALC Women National Board are the President, two vice-presidents, the secretary, three members-at-large and 18 district presidents. They all work voluntarily in this position.

The special areas of concern of women are :

Equality under the law - justice for minorities and poor. There is a need for women to be organized as leaders and decision-makers in the church as well as in the auxiliary. And there is also a need for women to see themselves as capable.

There is need of ordained women to receive calls into ministry.

ALC Women aims for 1976 - 1980 are as follows :

To help women discover a purpose for living which emanates from the Word

and accepts the abundant life in Christ, his daily forgiveness, and constant renewal in order that God's graciousness may be demonstrated through their acts of love.

To provide opportunities for women to know the will of our Lord by studying the word and hearing the gospel, and to do the will of our Lord by applying and living out relationships in the context of that gospel.

To affirm the value of a structural network which meets the diverse spiritual, personal, and social needs of women and frees them for mission in a variety of resurrected life-styles.

To enable each woman to see the life to which she has been called in Christ as ministry in order that her witness may enable others to know the love of God.

To enable women to realize that power for mission and ministry is unlimited through God's Holy Spirit in order to encourage them to accept responsibilities of leadership.

To provide resources that will encourage study and sharing groups that will establish and strengthen healthy relationships within and among families.

To enable and encourage every woman of the American Lutheran Church to exercise the rights and privileges of church membership in order to use all of the resources that women can bring to the congregation for mission and service.

To provide a stimulus for telling the good news through publications, programmes, and events so others may know the way of salvation.

To create an awareness of global character of our mission so we are sensitized to the needs of Christians all over the world and mutually share in ministry to each other.

To recognize that women have needs, that these needs are common to women, and to find ways to discover opportunities for study and service to meet these needs.

To give support and encouragement to those women with vision who, in the struggle for wholeness in church and society, are willing to take and accept risks.

The activities of ALC Women are mainly :

Bible study, stewardship - resources and training, education - resources and training, leadership training, seminars, Lutheran World Relief projects .

The ALC Women cooperate with Church Women United, the Lutheran Women's Cooperating Committee and the Lutheran World Federation, with the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches in a limited manner.

The role of women with regard to proclamation should be defined by their interest and abilities. Their full acceptance in the proclamation of the Gospel is important.

Women should contribute to educating and sensitizing the church community to inequalities within our society that restrict human development.

They should help to mobilize the church community into action to bring about such equality.

Julie Stine

ALC in Mission

The following observations were made during visits with women concerning the life and work of Lutheran church women in various parts of the world. All these groups are associated with the American Lutheran Church, USA.

During July and August, 1976 we were home for a two-month leave in the USA from Hong Kong where we have lived (for 12 years) and served in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong under the support of the Division of World Mission and Inter-Church Cooperation of the American Lutheran Church. During that time when we were in the USA we visited three of our supporting churches. I visited pastor's wives and other women concerning women's role in the church and society in the USA. I will not go into the American Lutheran Church Women's (ALCW) work as such too much, as that will be dealt with more completely by one of the other delegates from the American Lutheran Church. While at the annual Missions Retreat sponsored by the DWMIC of the American Lutheran Church I visited friends concerning their feelings and observations in the areas where they serve. All have served overseas for more than ten years.

In Rochester, Minnesota, Bethel Lutheran Church has nearly 3000 members. It follows the structure of the ALCW for their women's work. The general meetings of the ALCW draw a different group of women than those drawn to the circles. There has been an ALCW representative on the church council for four years. The ALCW handles its own funds. It may or may not channel it through the church treasurer. The money from the group is always divided for local and benevolent needs. The money realized from the fall Norwegian dinner is used for Missionary David Lee family support.

Rochester State Hospital for the Mentally Handicapped is a good place for in-service projects such as visiting, making blankets, bandages etc. Soap

is collected from the many hotels and motels that serve the people visiting the world-known medical clinic, Mayo Clinic. The women serve as hostesses at a friendship center near the clinic.

The women of the ALCW work closely with the Rochester Council of Women for projects such as World Day of Prayer. There is a Christian Women's Group which holds neighbourhood Bible studies and lunches at which some women participate.

While at the Missions Retreat for one week, I had interesting meetings with many women. One group consisted of three women leaders of the American Lutheran Church, one from New York, one from Minnesota, and the third from Texas. Two of the women are board members of the DWMIC and one was a Task Force member of the ALC and a teacher at a Lutheran College. The group felt that the ALC women's work at the local as well as national level meets a need as well as serving to strengthen the women in their relationship to their Saviour. Its structure and purpose are justified. If the needs are not met within the church the women will go to women's organizations outside the church. In the Midwest the structure is well adhered to. In the East and South they are a bit further removed from "headquarter". Conventions are strongly questioned by southern and eastern people. Concern for "young parents" emphasis would be welcomed. Where can this fit into the structure of the church? Should this be an ALCW concern?

The Lutheran Church in America has a very strong, workable, and respected leadership training programme. Leaders must be "structure backers". All these leaders in this conversation were grateful for the ALCW structure as it had been a training ground for all of them: locally, conference, district and nationally. I must say the same for myself. They did not feel, however, that the perpetuation of the structure should be number one concern of the leaders. All felt that the ALCW structure does work and is a great aid to the church.

One woman in the group was a teacher in an ALC college. There is growing concern for women's awareness on the college level. They want to be aware of various roles and how needs can be met. They want to be prepared for marriage and motherhood.

The president of Radcliff College in the USA has a good paper on college women. (I believe her name is Matina Horner.) She feels the church could and should speak to the young college-bound girls. She has discovered that grades and motivation fall off at the 11th grade of high school and the Junior year in college. (These are the years prior to the final year.) There seems to be a marked difference. Could mothers and church women help at times like these if such patterns of behaviour are so pronounced?

As we visited we noticed our awareness of women's concerns world-wide had become a very real issue in each of our lives. It had been a very real part of our lives for many years. We began to talk about women many years ago who had written books showing awareness of women and their needs. Dorothy Sawyer's book "ARE WOMEN HUMAN" is a classic. A British woman, Virginia Woolf wrote about and with real concern for women

in England years ago. Names like Eleanor Roosevelt were mentioned, and we talked about the Equal Rights Amendment which is a "hot" issue in America now. Some of the demonstrations in New York were mentioned. Most were sickening and so dishonest; groups dressed in raving pink; signs saying: "We'll lose our toilets", and "I don't want to be drafted", etc. We touched on the subject of black women and how much good material has been written pointing out the fact that the black women have been forced to be independent for many generations. Here are women blacks with a unique role in the USA.

Husbands, wives, board members and staff of the DWMIC of the ALC in discussion one afternoon at the Missions Retreat. Bo Sorenson, the Director of the Division presented some of the struggles they are facing concerning the women's role in missions. A Task Force did a terrific job trying to evaluate where the woman who lives and works in overseas missions is right now. Representatives of the Task Force wanted us to know that they uphold us in prayer and concern. They see us in a specific role and do not put us all in "one bag". All areas of overseas services are extremely unique and different in ethnic, national and family structure. It was noted that a single woman gets 75% salary in comparison to what a married couple gets. The question was raised: "Is this not discrimination?" When compensation for services rendered was discussed some felt that the wife who needed to be at home caring for children might also be discriminated against. How do we look at the husband/wife team ministry? Has the woman been too much taken for granted in the overseas service role? Do the overseas churches take advantage of her and "burn her out" instead of training and using local women? What does the word "compensate" mean? Is a missionary not supposed to "go" and do whatever he/she is told to do? Should specific needs be dwelt on or even met? What about expertise? If a woman/wife has such, should it not be recognized and compensated for? It was mentioned that many women now have high degrees of learning and hold separate salaries from their husbands, and should be called to serve in specific callings to overseas service and receive separate salaries like they do in their home country.

Following is a meeting with a missionary wife from New Guinea. She went out as a "single lady" and married a missionary. She has seen her role of many years mostly as a mother and helpmate to her husband.

There are overseas Deaconesses and Bible women called by the districts of the Lutheran Church in New Guinea. The overseas worker aims at working herself out of a job. She told of a widow who chose to stay in New Guinea after her missionary husband died. She seemed to be able to do much more than the single women could do in relating and working with the local women. She helped women to see in what way and where they could be of service and ministry in their society and church. She was not a "pusher". "Pushers" always seem to fail in New Guinea. Structure is too foreign. Leaders seem to have to develop their own materials and methods. In local congregations local women are Sunday School teachers. It was interesting to me to note there is no "family social structure" as such in New Guinea. In the villages and tribes the women and children live in separate dwellings from men. When boys get old enough they go into men's dwellings, and likewise the girls. The older women of the

community are "looked up to". The pastor's wife does not seem to have any specific role.

A woman by the name of "Mama Welch" is remembered for her work with women. After the Second World War she noticed the women grouped together feeding their babies; sometimes they were gathered outside the churches. She would invite them to come together in the middle of the week, and she would share with them her faith in Jesus. Sometimes it would be single girls. One local girl went to a leadership training school in the Highlands. She mentioned that she remembered the work of Mama Welch. Most leadership training is done on an interdenominational level. There are several language- and cultural differences between coast and highland people.

Every two years there is a national women's convention. Lectures on family planning, Bible studies (written by the one who presents it), reports from districts, and talks given by New Guinea women and pastors are presented.

The women I visited remembered a New Guinea woman in the mountains saying she felt pretty worthless in her society - "like a tree limb ready to be cut off", "what am I getting out of life anyway?". The society is very materialistic. You work only to get something out of it.

Girls' schools run by missions have added a great deal to the Christian society. These girls see their responsibilities to society and family as a wholesome one. Many hold important positions in society and government.

During the conversation the important early years of child life were stressed, and it was hoped that even in New Guinea the mother/family role of each individual would be seen as important in the church structure.

When visiting women who have lived and worked in Japan it was noted that there are no Japanese Bible women in the Japan Lutheran Church. The single woman missionary works closely with the pastor. There is a local women's group, and the missionary working with them follows the western structure quite closely. The pastor gives lecture type studies. Materials come from the Headquarters of the Japan Lutheran Church. They meet weekly on the local level and yearly for district and general conventions. The pastor's wife plays an important role in the church as an assistant to the pastor and church groups and committees. Some homes are continuously open for meetings, helping with weddings, etc.

The church is not involved in providing education through high schools or primary schools. However, there are many churches that have nurseries and preschools. Women of the church assist in these schools. The role of the woman in the home is greatly appreciated. The husband respects her role and interferes very little. Weekends are family times for outings, etc.

There are many women who work outside of the home, but a mother's role is seen as a homemaker and is of primary importance.

From Cameroon came some interesting insights. Older women play a leader role in the church or society.

There is no place for single women in church and society; thus, most are prostitutes. The man is ruler of the home. The woman is his "garden". The wife is expected to have no feelings. If a woman is going to share her faith with her children she must really be a strong Christian, "truly enlightened about the Lord and strengthened by His Spirit", because she is under her husband's command and use.

Within the church women's group structure, there is a local, regional and national level. Locally, they meet in a simple way, learn a verse from the Bible and are encouraged to share with the children what they learn. Material used at all levels is written by missionaries. Problems of society and church are discussed at district meetings. They are continually encouraged to share faith with their children. The older women are leaders at district level. Women will speak up very spontaneously. Since there are so few who can read it is natural to be a follower.

In the South the groups are stronger and the leaders come from this area. This is because this area was a British colony and they are better educated. The vastly different languages in the various areas must be kept in mind. They love military dress and formations and bring this into gatherings such as conventions... "Soldiers for Jesus"... guns and all. They are very style-conscious. The Norwegian missionaries have a respected leadership role with the women. The music at large gatherings is original. The radio ministry is respected and the "radio-pastor" gives messages at conventions and gatherings.

Locally they may meet once a week with a catechist who has a Bible school certificate. He is placed by the national church. So far, there are no women catechists. There are generally no women nurses or doctors. They serve as aids. However, there is a school in the South now for women nurses.

The woman's garden is her domain and she will sell the products on the market to get money to give to the church or she may use her products as an offering.

Church weddings are becoming more and more popular, especially if people can afford it. This includes renting a car, dresses, big party, etc. Most, however, still do not want church weddings because then they feel they must "stay married". If they want compensation from the government for their children they must get a licence: There is a good education system provided by the government. All the teachers are men.

Mention was made of a leadership training programme which was well carried out and greatly appreciated. It was thought to have been an LWF-sponsored programme.

The same comment was made by the Madagascar people. In such circumstances it was difficult to determine how much of what had been learned and was being used.

To share a bit about Hong Kong: I guess I'd have to say the local level is most important. There are some 30 churches in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong. There is a synod's women's committee that meets

once a month. The committee consists of women from churches in different areas of Hong Kong. They are aware of needs of the local group, but seem to have trouble communicating their advice and concern. A general meeting is called twice a year. Speeches, dances by children, and music and fellowship over tea is shared.

Following Pastor Eva Zabolai-Csekme's visit in 1974, an All-Lutheran Women's organization was formed in Hong Kong. This created stronger and broader communication and fellowship.

On the local level the Bible woman plays an important role. She meets with the women once a week to share scripture, a message, and prayer fellowship. She plays an important role in the youth ministry as well. Most have had Bible school training. They now attend the seminary. There are no women ordained so far. Most of the Lutheran women in Hong Kong come from the middle and upper class, have attended High School and other education. Many are professional women. Pastor's wives are fully employed and most are teachers. Education is a prime value in Hong Kong and the church plays a vital role in education. Most local churches have had primary schools as part of their structure, but it has become burdensome, and they are slowly becoming nursery schools. The church leaders are aware of the masses and try to encourage the members of the local churches to meet needs as they see them in society.

However, the "take care of your own family" idea is very real and it sometimes affects the church attitude. They question if they should really become too involved in society's problems.

On the whole, the Christian society in Taiwan and Hong Kong is wealthy and the need to save and invest money overseas and locally is felt more and more. The main reason for such action is that children and/or families can get out and live overseas. The problem is very real..."just how much responsibility do I have to the society in which I am living, including the church?"

As an English speaking community, we meet for Bible study and fellowship with those from many backgrounds. We have a monthly group which we call the Lutheran English speaking women's Bible study consisting of people from all over the world. We use the "Scope" Bible study (ALC). We share, and feel that this is a great help and support group.

As an American, and as a woman member of the ALC, I have appreciated the years in the parish as a pastor's wife and the association with the women's groups at local, conference and district levels. These women give us a great deal of support through the mail, and most of all, prayer. Many of them are very special personal friends, not the least my mother and mother-in-law. From my early childhood years, I can remember going to women's gatherings and meetings and assisting in various meetings as a teenager. In the Parish the meetings and studies have been a means to stimulate me further to study and become aware of my Lord and Saviour and God's world around me. I want my three daughters to feel that there is a source of education, inspiration, vision, caring and much more in the fellowship of Christ among women in the Lutheran Church.

Lorraine Lee

Lutheran Church in America

Lutheran Church Women (LCW) is the official auxiliary of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). As an autonomous organization, LCW is responsible for financing its own program and reports directly to the convention of the church.

The congregational organization is the basic membership unit of LCW. The auxiliary is composed of 5000 such congregational organizations throughout the United States and Canada. Individually, members number approximately 240,000. Thirty-two synodical units are branches of the auxiliary and represent geographical areas (states and Canadian provinces). These synodical units vary in size but generally include from ten to thirty local LCW's. This structure of the auxiliary follows that of the LCA.

The auxiliary meets every three years in convention and elects a twenty-one member board of directors, adopts a budget, sets major program directions and makes major policies. The convention program introduces emphases for the new triennium. The board of directors conducts the business of the auxiliary between conventions.

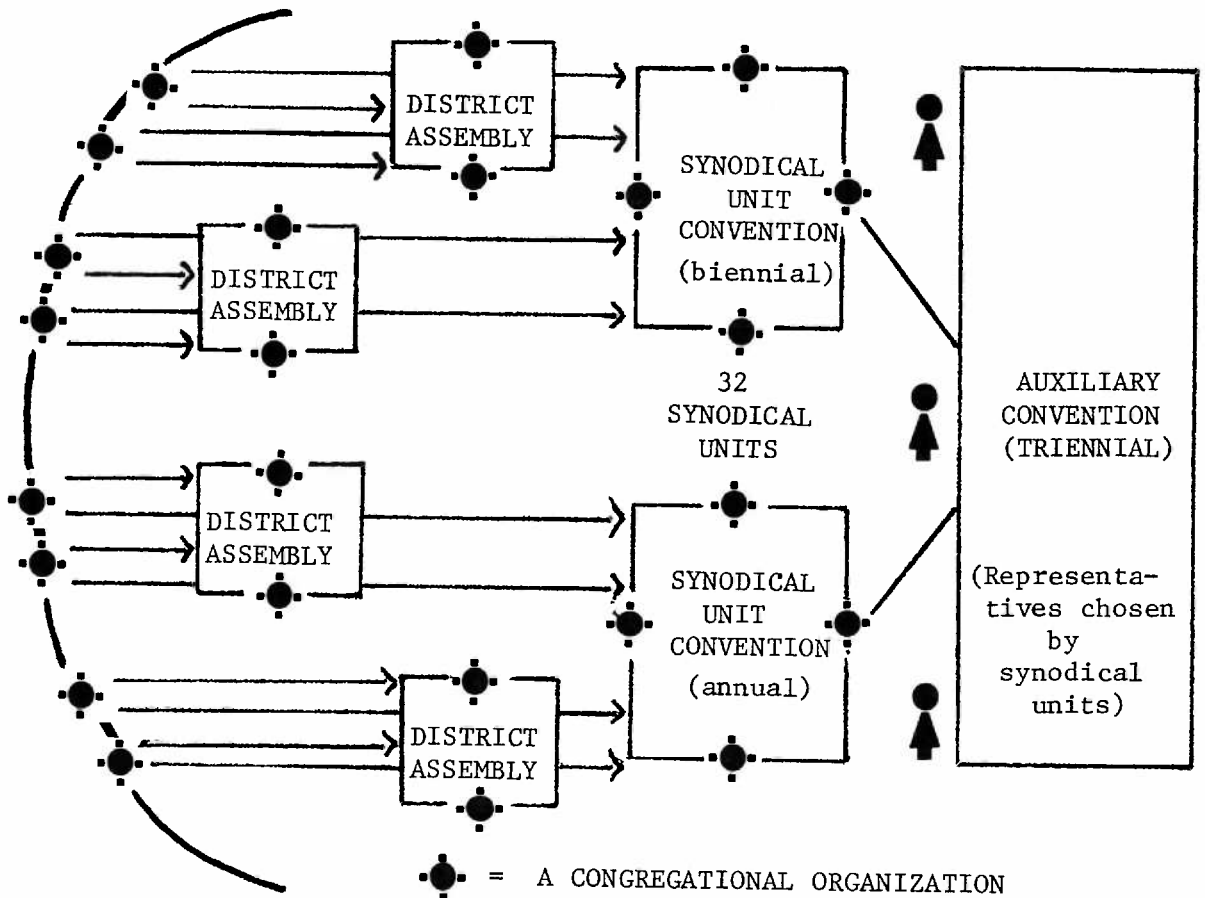
The thirty-two synodical units meet in convention every one or two years to conduct unit business and provide education, fellowship, inspiration and a sense of oneness in Christ. Each unit elects an executive board from twelve to sixteen members which, like the board of directors, carries out the business of the synodical units between conventions.

District assemblies meet at least once a year for interpretation of the LCW program, fellowship, leadership development and inspiration. A chairperson and secretary are the officers of the district assembly.

Congregational organizations have varying times for coming together for fellowship, learning, witness and service. Generally small circles within

each organization meet nine or ten times a year. The entire organization may then meet once a month, but this will more often occur quarterly. At these times, business is also conducted. Congregational organizations elect executive committees usually comprised of eight to twelve persons.

The chart below shows the organizational structure of LCW.



LWC is a volunteer organization, however, the board of directors employs seventeen persons, eight staff and nine support staff who are responsible for planning and implementing an auxiliarywide program. Headquarters of the auxiliary are located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

Although an autonomous organization, the auxiliary is bound by the actions of the church convention and the executive council of the church which meets between conventions. The executive director is a member of the cabinet of executives, composed of the executive directors of LCA church-wide agencies, which meets three or four times a year under the chairpersonship of the president of the church. LCW staff persons participate in a number of LCA staff teams appointed by the president of the church to carry out common tasks across agency lines in related program areas.

LCW Program : "Mission in the 70's"

The structure for the total program of LCW is outlined in "Mission in the 70's" as adopted by the 1971 triennial convention of the auxiliary and refined in 1974. Based on the statement of the mission of the LCA and of the auxiliary, "Mission in the 70's" includes six major areas of responsibilities (functions) and twenty-eight statements of intended outcomes (aims). Triennial conventions determine which aims and social concern priorities are to be emphasized in a triennium.

Exhibit I shows "Mission in the 70's" and the aims selected for emphasis during the 1974-77 triennium.

Although all parts of the auxiliary use "Mission in the 70's" as a framework for planning, congregational organizations are at differing stages of ability in using a goal setting process. Congregational organizations carry out the program through a wide variety of projects and activities. These help women find deeper and enriched meaning in their Christian discipleship through study of Scripture, the teachings and heritage of the church, problems of everyday living and social and world issues. Women have opportunities to gain new understandings of issues and learn practical ways of witnessing and serving. Congregational organizations initiate a wide variety of activities within their congregation and nearby church related institutions or agencies and also within their communities. These activities include traditional Christian service such as visiting the sick and shut-ins, sewing and a variety of assistance on a person-to-person basis. An increasing number of congregational organizations are also working to combat massive problems such as hunger, social injustice and illiteracy.

Outreach in the community may also be shared with other organizations especially Church Women United and other Lutheran women's groups.

In addition to providing opportunity for education, witness and service, congregational organizations are a key place for the development of leaders. Congregational organization leaders participate in training experiences provided within their congregational organization and by the synodical unit. These experiences include information giving and skill training in decision-making, planning and specific leadership roles.

Congregational organizations finance their own program and contribute funds to financing the program of the unit and the auxiliary. Funds sent to the auxiliary include contributions for the LCW financial gift to the LCA.

By definition of purpose, synodical units are responsible for guiding congregational organizations in their involvement in mission in and beyond their local settings. To fulfill these responsibilities, the unit executive board sets unit goals and organizes itself into committees to implement projects and activities such as :

- 1) helping women's groups organize themselves into LCW congregational organizations;

- 2) conducting leadership training workshops;
- 3) planning and implementing a synodical unit convention, district assembly meetings, retreats and Days of Renewal;
- 4) developing and distributing a synodical unit newsletter or similar communication to congregational organizations to inform and encourage them in their study, fellowship and service;
- 5) interpreting at synodical unit events or to individual congregational organizations the role of LCW and women in the life and work of the church.

Although briefly stated here, the efforts of the synodical unit executive board are interpreted as enabling efforts. Their efforts enable congregational organization leaders and members to become better equipped for engaging in "declaring the Good News of Jesus Christ" through word and deed.

Likewise, the auxiliary plays an enabling role for synodical units and congregational organizations.

Growing in Faith

The auxiliary provides resources to help women (1) find deeper and enriched meaning in their Christian discipleship through study of Scripture, faith and heritage, and (2) increase understanding and willingness to assume responsibility for individual and corporate witness. The major printed materials offered are Bible studies and program resources.

Resources for Bible study methods and organizing prayer fellowship groups have also been produced.

Program resources developed by LCW are broad in scope. They address, from a Christian perspective, commonplace problems and challenges as well as crisis situations.

The need for flexibility and adaptability in program building caused LCW to produce elective resources and to help members be more aware of materials produced by LCA churchwide and interdenominational agencies. By using these churchwide and interdenominational agency produced resources, LCW members are educated in the work of the church and particularly the Lutheran Church in America.

Lutheran Women

Lutheran Women, the auxiliary's official magazine, is a "reader's" magazine rather than an organizational "how to" tool. It provides information about concerns and emphases of the LCA and specific programs of LCW. It is a valuable resource for the development of programs related to current issues. Auxiliary Bible studies and a prayer calendar appear regularly in Lutheran Women, adding a dimension of oneness in Christian study and fellowship.

Fostering Global Interdependence

A global perspective and recognition of "interdependence" have always been integral to the life and work of LCW. Increased emphasis on helping women gain a realistic "world perspective" of Christian responsibility has opened the way for new program emphases.

The opportunity for LCW staff members to gain first-hand knowledge of the worldwide work of the church helps to provide a global perspective for the life and work of LCW. LCW staff members have been participants in overseas conferences and have served as resource persons for overseas conferences and have served as resource persons for overseas seminars.

Shalom-Peace Seminars

In September and October 1975, nearly 300 women from Lutheran Church Women, American Lutheran Church Women and the Lutheran Women's Missionary League participated in three Shalom-Peace Seminars.

At the seminars, women were confronted with personal, home, community, national and global issues which threaten peace and explored ways in which they could become peace builders. After the seminars, the participants relayed to synodical units, district assemblies and congregational organizations ways in which people can work for "things that make for peace".

Latin American Seminars

In June 1975, twenty-one women participated in LCW's twenty-two day Latin America Reality Seminar. The seminar was planned to enable women to study the interdependence of North and South Americans, observe how the church witnesses under different social and governmental systems and dialogue about common concerns with women from different cultures who share a common faith.

Pilot Projects

In 1974, LCW initiated a pilot world mission education project in a synodical unit. The project's purpose was to foster greater emphasis on world mission education in congregations throughout the synod. LCW provided materials and staff assistance for the project. Findings from the evaluation of this project have been used to prepare guidelines for carrying out world mission education in other areas of the church.

Pilot projects designed to enable women to support one another in crisis and change situations were initiated by LCW in 1975 in two synodical units. Participants at the initial meetings agreed to experiment in setting up and sustaining support groups for at least twelve months. Although this project is within a North American context, it has potential global impact as women recognize the need to support their sisters in other parts of the world.

Mobilizing for Action

Matching the needs of people and resources for meeting these needs receives high priority in LCW. Through education and action strategies, LCW systematically calls upon its members to relate faith to their "Monday world".

First, LCW stresses, through written and oral communications, the biblical imperatives for Christian involvement in social concerns. The essentials of both individual and corporate action are lifted up as LCW helps women accept the responsibility for action which is motivated by Christ and consistent with faith.

Second, LCW maintains a social concerns communications network. This is an "alert system" directed to leaders. It alerts these persons to (1) possible study/action resources related to LCW's 1974-77 priority social concerns: children's rights, aging, literacy, criminal justice and world hunger; (2) pending legislation which could be influenced by communications and (3) information which can be used in educating and organizing for action.

Third, LCW develops awareness-raising tools to help persons understand the extent and dimension of selected social concerns. These tools are used as an introductory step to study and action.

Fourth, LCW equips leaders to conduct workshops in the area of social concerns. Eighteen social concerns workshops were conducted in 1975 and 1976.

Fifth, LCW prepares people to tutor illiterate adults. Nearly two thousand Volunteer Reading Aides (VRA's) were trained during 1974-1975. The VRA program is carried out in areas where little or no volunteer literacy programs exist, or where special training programs are requested.

In 1975, the Volunteer Reading Aides program also trained volunteers to teach English to Vietnamese, Chinese, and Cambodian refugees. Because of the urgency of the situation, in just a few months hundreds of volunteers were given special training in how to teach English as a second language.

Sixth, LCW strengthens the impact of LCW and the LCA in the area of social concerns through working cooperatively with other churchwide agencies. This inter-agency cooperative relationship has been evident in initiating response to such issues as : injustices in Namibia, the "right to food" legislation and corporate investment responsibility.

Seventh, LCW provides grants through its Fund for the Development of Human Resources. This fund makes possible the development of human resources, particularly among women. In 1974-75, twelve projects received grants. The projects included child-care centers, American and Canadian Indian programs, a half-way house for youth, programs for women offenders, a support program for widows and widowers, and a radio ministry for the aging.

Relating Ecumenically

LCW provides, guides and encourages women to develop and implement inter-Lutheran programs and projects and participates in interdenominational efforts.

The Lutheran Women's Cooperating Committee (LWCC), composed of representatives from Lutheran Church Women, American Lutheran Church Women (ALCW), and Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), has been responsible for planning and implementing several major events. One, the Shalom-Peace seminars, has been referred to earlier in this report.

Early in 1974, the LWCC sponsored a two-week study trip in Hong Kong. This "Faith sharing" experience provided the opportunity for an international team of Lutheran women from the United States, Canada, Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines, to share faith and understanding as Christian women. North American women were members of ALCW, LWML, and LCW.

The LWCC has encouraged exchange programs among Lutheran leaders in North America. This involves inviting one's counterpart in ALCW and LWML to participate actively in LCW-sponsored events.

Lutheran Church Women encourages participation in Church Women United. Increasing numbers of LCW members are participating in the three Days of Celebration of Church Women United : World Day of Prayer, May Fellowship Day, and World Community Day. Canadian women participate in World Day of Prayer as members of the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada.

Equipping Leaders

Leadership and participation skills acquired through Lutheran Church Women training experiences are providing valuable to women as they assume leadership both within and beyond LCW. Leadership training experiences equip persons for specific tasks and challenge them to strengthen Christian community. The fellowship and oneness in Christ built during the days of workshops provide ongoing support for witness and service.

To strengthen leaders in synodical units, workshops are conducted for synodical unit presidents, district assembly coordinators, unit treasurers and communicators. Skills and information obtained enable these leaders to function more effectively in assuming their particular tasks and also enhance their ability to enable others.

Congregational organizations also receive a leadership tool, Guidelines. This quarterly newsletter for leaders is packed with organizational helps and reports related to programs and program materials. Another helpful tool, the Idea Book for Congregational Organizations, was introduced in 1974 and is updated annually. The collection of ideas and resources for programs contained in the Idea Book help leaders plan and implement programs.

Finances

LCW provided \$ 44.161 in 1974 and \$ 918.311 in 1975 for specific LCA ministries and the total outreach of the church. One Million dollars continues to be LCW's annual financial goal for the LCA. In addition to the financial gift to the LCA, LCW finances its own ongoing program.

Reach Out Grants made possible by a bequest are used to : supplement existing projects or create new ones within the auxiliary program, support projects within the LCA program which meet specific needs , and fund projects outside of LCW and the LCA which are consistent with the purpose and aims of the auxiliary and church policy.

Each year, LCW provides scholarship support to LCA women for higher and continuing education. Some of the funds go to the Division for World Mission and Ecumenism to assist LCA women preparing for specialized Christian service careers. Other funds are earmarked for mature and minority group women for undergraduate, graduate, professional or vocational studies.

Problems and Concerns of Women in Society and Church

Great variation exists in the opinions of women about the role and status of women in society and the church. For some, the way things are is the way they should remain. For others, strong feelings of oppression exist and there is a restlessness that change is occurring far too slowly. Whether one welcomes or rejects the existing roles of women, anxiety exists as changes are occurring.

Lutheran Church Women has not surveyed their constituency to determine what concerns/problems would be identified most frequently. It is difficult to draw clear lines in distinguishing concerns in society and in the church but it is assumed that the following would be identified as concerns within both :

1. Family - family patterns and lifestyles - parent-child relationships;
2. Development of values and moral and ethical standards;
3. Sex and marriage ;
4. Equality of access of women and men to education, employment, economic power and decision making.

Some would also identify global concerns but many are just beginning to be aware of the implications of world community.

In addition to these, persons within the church may also be particularly concerned about :

1. Lack of acceptance of ordained women in parish and specialized ministries ;
2. Application of faith to everyday issues ;
3. World mission outreach;

4. Lack of partnership and complimentary roles of women and men in the church.

Women and men should be partners in the proclamation of the Gospel, both having equal access to participation in the life and work of the church, whether this be as lay or ordained persons.

Human Development

Women could be assuming a more active and aggressive role in human development. They could :

1. Influence the development of policies and laws through contacts, written and personally, with decision makers;
2. Prepare themselves for assuming leadership roles within the structures of society and the church;
3. Require increased accountability of institutions, agencies and governments in carrying out projects and program;
4. Exercise greater support for one another through prayer and the sharing of knowledge and skills;
5. Utilize networks of communication which raise awareness of needs and provide an arena for the exchange of ideas.

Lois Leffler

EXHIBIT I

M I S S I O N

IN THE 70's

AS APPROVED AT THE 1974 LCW TRIENNIAL CONVENTION

In LCW we as individuals, as members of local organizations, synodical units, board and staff are partners. We share "partnership in the Gospel" as well as partnership in carrying out the purpose of Lutheran Church Women.

The direction in which we need to move together in order to accomplish our purpose is stated in Mission in the 70's. Mission in the 70's starts with a statement of the mission of the church and continues with a statement of the mission of LCW. Then six areas of responsibility or functions follow. These functions describe particular areas in which we need to continue to work in order to carry out our mission. Within all functions are aims. These aims state the results that we hope to accomplish.

Mission in the 70's, first adopted in 1971, was refined at the 1974 LCW Triennial Convention. These changes are reflected below. In addition the convention selected specific aims within the first five functions for emphasis during this triennium. These aims are marked with *. Also note that in Function IV in addition to selecting aims to emphasize, five social concerns priorities were selected. No specific aims in Function VI were selected for emphasis since all are essential to the operation of the auxiliary.

As partners in LCW we are all challenged to use Mission in the 70's as a guide for planning and evaluating our efforts to accomplish mission.

THE CHURCH AND ITS MISSION

Members of the Lutheran Church in America are partners in a mission "to engage as many persons as will share its confession of faith in a fellowship of worship, learning witness and service that the word of God in Jesus Christ may become effective in their lives together and individually including relationships with other Christian fellowship and with social institutions at home and throughout the world."

Because of the importance of the mission and the diversity of the LCA geographically and in activities, the church has organized its work into six areas. The mission is accomplished as we work to :

- Grow in faith,
- Reach others with the Gospel
- Serve needs in society

Cooperate with other communities of faith
Develop professional leadership and
Support corporate effectiveness

LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN AND ITS MISSION

Lutheran Church Women is a fellowship of women who, in response to the Holy spirit, engage in the mission of proclamation and reconciliation through their life and work and through the life and work of the Lutheran Church in America.

FUNCTION I

PERSONAL ACCEPTANCE OF AND WITNESS TO THE GOSPEL

Assisting women to face their personal relationship to Christ and to confront others with the Gospel.

AIM A RESPONDING TO THE GOSPEL

Deepened personal relationship to God, commitment to Christ and willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit.

*AIM B BEING WILLING TO WITNESS

Increased willingness to witness individually and corporately.

FUNCTION II

NURTURE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

Assisting women to increase their knowledge of Christian faith and heritage.

*AIM A UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN FAITH

Increased understanding of Scripture, faith and heritage.

*AIM B UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN MISSION

Increased understanding of mission and the specific concerns and programs of the LCA and LCW.

FUNCTION III

SELF-IDENTITY AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Assisting women from a Christian perspective to develop a sense of self-identity and to relate with others, individually and in groups.

*AIM A DEVELOPING SELF-IDENTITY

Increased sense of self-identity as a person created in God's image.

*AIM B RELATING FAITH AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Increased understanding and acceptance that through common and crisis circumstances of life Christian faith and commitment find meaning and expression.

AIM C UNDERSTANDING FAMILY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Increased understanding of family roles and acceptance of responsibilities in various stages of family life cycles.

AIM D RELATING TO OTHER INDIVIDUALS

Increased understanding of the value and influence of relationships with other individuals.

AIM E PARTICIPATING IN GROUPS WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Increased participation in groups which provide for fellowship, personal development and fulfilment of mission.

FUNCTION IV

CHRISTIAN FAITH RELATED TO HUMAN NEEDS

Assisting women to understand human needs and ills everywhere and to relate their faith to responsible involvement.

AIM A ACCEPTING PERSONAL ABILITIES

Increased acceptance of personal responsibilities for expressing faith in action within one's own abilities and limitations.

*AIM B STRIVING FOR NEEDED CHANGES IN SOCIETY

Increased understanding of the necessity for Christians to participate in bringing about needed changes in institutions and society through individual and group action.

AIM C UNDERSTANDING WORLD CITIZENSHIP

Increased understanding and realization that all persons are participants in the world community.

AIM D WORKING FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND JUSTICE

Increased involvement in healing the hurts and eliminating the injustices of people who are neglected, denied or exploited in society.

*AIM E INTERACTING WITH PERSONS HAVING SPECIFIC NEEDS

Increased understanding and interacting with persons having specific needs related to age, handicaps and stages of life.

AIM F COMBATTING THE EXPLOITATION OF THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE

Increased understanding of the interdependence of all things in the universe and the Christian's responsibility as a steward of God's creation.

AIM G APPRECIATING DIFFERENT CULTURES

Increased understanding and appreciation for the contribution of differing cultures to the wholeness of society.

In its struggle for human dignity and justice, LCW will emphasize social concerns pertaining to aging, literacy, children's rights, criminal justice and world hunger during the 1974-77 triennium.

FUNCTION V

ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIPS

Assisting and encouraging women to increase their engagement in ecumenical efforts which contribute to Christian witness and to relate to persons and agencies of other faiths.

*AIM A WORKING TOWARD COOPERATION AMONG LUTHERAN WOMEN

Increased oneness and cooperation among Lutheran women locally, nationally and internationally.

AIM B WORKING TOWARD INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION AMONG WOMEN

Increased interdenominational fellowship and cooperation among women to accomplish common ministries and goals.

AIM C UNDERSTANDING LCA INTER-LUTHERAN AND INTERDENOMINATIONAL EFFORTS

Increased understanding of the LCA involvement locally, nationally and internationally in inter-Lutheran and interdenominational efforts.

AIM D INCREASING INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIPS

Increased dialogue and cooperation with persons and agencies of non-Christian faith.

FUNCTION VI

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR INVOLVEMENT IN MISSION

Assisting women to understand and provide support for administration necessary to function effectively throughout LCW.

AIM A PARTICIPATING IN DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

Increased participation and skill in decision making processes.

AIM B PLANNING FOR FULFILLMENT OF CHRISTIAN MISSION

Increased systematic planning throughout the auxiliary.

AIM C DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION

Continued provision for support, maintenance, flexibility and renewal of LCW structures and operations for the fulfillment of mission.

AIM D MANAGING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Increased giving and wise use of financial resources for the fulfillment of mission

AIM E DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Increased development of the skills and abilities of LCW staff for personal growth and maximum job performance.

AIM F DEVELOPING VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Increased development and use of volunteer leadership skills and abilities in the implementation of the LCW program.

AIM G COMMUNICATING THE PROGRAM AND CONCERNS OF LCW

Increased development and use of communication systems which enable women to understand and fulfill the purpose of LCW.

AIM H DEVELOPING AND USING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Increased development and use of information systems which assist in evaluation of existing programs and contribute to decision making and planning.

*

these aims are to be emphasized during the 1974-1977 triennium.

Involvement of Women
LWF Survey (Summer 1976)

NORTH AMERICA (ADDENDUM)

Country and Church	Possibility of theol. Education	Number of female theologians	Ordination to full ministry	Ordination to limited ministry	What kind of ministry do ordained women perform ?	In what capacities are women employed by the church ?	Number	Does the church employ married or other women?	Position <u>not</u> open to ordained or other women	Representation on official church bodies	Representation on international bodies	Involvement in missionary work outside the country
Methodist Episcopal Church in North America, USA	yes		yes, since 1970	no	all kinds	Ordained minister 37 Parish worker 21 Director of Christ. Education 13 Director of Christ. Educat.+Youth Ministry 18 Director of Church Music 16 Organist-Choirmaster 13 Parish educator 26 Parish educator and Youth worker 20 Vacation Church School teacher 47.632 Weekday Church School teacher 4.243 Sunday School teacher 51% of total 61.675 full-time staff f.women's work on nat.level 73% of total 8 lay associates 16 youth staffer on national level 1 youth staffers on synodical level 9		yes	all open	Synod/diocese 77 (13% of total) Church Council 13.804 (23% of total)	L W F Advisory Committee on Women in the Church	144 total Argentina, Chile, England, Ethiopia, Fiji, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Liberia, Malaysia, Middle East, Nepal, Peru, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad, Uruguay

A S I A

Country and Church	Possibility of theol. Education	Number of female theologians	Ordination to full ministry	Ordination to limited ministry	What kind of ministry do ordained women perform ?	In what capacities are women employed in the church ?	Number	Does the church employ married women	Positions not open to ordained or other women	Representation on official church bodies		Representation on international bodies (voluntary)	Involvement in missionary work outside the country
Hong Kong Evang.Luth. Church	yes	10 students in 1976	no	no	-	Bible women Sunday school teach. Instruct.rel.educat. Youth work other	8 100 30 1 1	yes	-	church elder Synod	1 5	World Day of Prayer LWF Advisory Comm. on Women in the Church	no
India Evang.Luth. Church	yes	3	no	no	-	Bible women Sunday school teach. Women's work	6 100 1	yes	-	none		none	no
Gossner Evang.Luth Church India	yes	7	no	no	-	Parish worker Bible women Sunday school teach. Instruct.rel.educat. other	18 ? 600 2	yes	1.Execut.positions 2.Church committees 3.no voting rights in congregations	none		none	no
Tamil Evang.Luth. Church India	yes	2 students	no	no	-	Parish worker Bible women Sunday school teach. Instruct.rel.educat. Women's Work Diaconesses	14 12 many many 3 9	yes	Participat.of women in divine services (Bible reading, prayers, etc.)	Church elders Synod/ diocese	3% 5%	World Day of Prayer, Fellowship of the Least Coin, Asian Church Women's Conference	
Batak Protestant Christian Church HKBP Indonesia	yes	7	no	yes -no administr. of sacraments -no confirma- tion&consecra- tion -no parish leading	-social services -women's work (-conducting worship preaching& rel.ed. only for women, youth and children)	Parish worker } Bible women } Diaconesses Sunday school teach. Instruct.rel.ed. Women's work	76 16 5000 76 4	yes	Administering Sacraments, Preaching for adults	church elders	15	World Day of Prayer	no
Batak Christ. Community Church	yes	1 candidate for 1977	no	no	-	Bible women Sunday school teach.	2 20	yes	none open	church elders Synod/diocese church council	2 1 1	World Day of Prayer	no
Christian Protestant Church, Indo-nesia, GKPI	yes	2	no	not yet ordained but possible	Youth work, social services, worship & preaching, religious education, women's work	Bible women Sunday school teach. other	9 many 2	yes	Bishop, General Secretary,Resort pastor,congregational leader	church elders Synod/diocese church council	9 3 2	no	no
Indonesian Christ.Church HKI	yes	none	no	no	-	Bible women Sunday school teach.	4 250	no	Administering Sacraments and other church ceremonies	Synod/diocese	5	no	no
Simalungun Protestant Christ.Church Indonesia, GKPS	yes	1	no	yes no adminstr. of sacraments	Youth work, social services,worship preaching, liturgy, relig.education women's work	Bible women Parish worker Sunday school. teach.	22 23 1000	yes		Synod/diocese church council	2 2-10	Asian Church Women's Conference	-
Luth.Church in Korea	no	-	no	no	-	Sunday school. teach.	45	no	none	-		-	-
Luth.Church in Malaysia & Singapore	yes	there were 4-5,but they married	no appli-cants	-	-	Parish worker Bible women	1 1	no	none	church elder church council	1 25- 30	World Day of Prayer	-
Luth.Church in the Philippines	no	-	no	no	-	Sunday school teach. Instructor rel.educat.	95 10	yes	-	church council	few	-	-
Taiwan Luth.Church	yes	1	not yet	no	-	Parish worker Bible women Sunday school teach. Instr.rel.educat. Youth work Women's work Medical workers	4 3 83 1 1 1 4	yes	-	church elders Synod/diocese church council	1 2 1	World Day of prayer LWF Scholarship Governing Committee Study Committee on mixed marriage	-
Evan.Luth Church, Papua N.Guinea	yes	first students in 1977	no	no	-	Bible women Sunday school teach. Women's work	500 12	yes	Ordination	Synod/diocese	12	World Day of Prayer Women's Conference	-

EUROPE

Country and Church	Possibility of theol. Education	Number of female theologians	Ordination to full ministry	Ordination to limited ministry	What kind of ministry do ordained women perform ?	In what capacities are women employed by the church ?	Number	Does the church employ women ?	Positions not open to ordained or other women	Representation on official church bodies	Representation on international bodies (voluntary)	Involvement in missionary work outside the country
Evangelical Luth.Church in Denmark	yes	app. 1/3	yes,since 1947		all kinds	ordained ministers app. parish worker, Sunday school teach., rel.educat, Youth work women's work	90 ?	yes yes	in principle none	we don't have bodies like elders or synods. church council ?	LWF Commissions YWCA	Ethiopia, Tanzania Nigeria, India Bangla Desh, Taiwan
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland	yes	app. 1000	no	yes, lectors who are not ordained	lectors: counselling, youth and women's work, social services, preaching, religious educat.	Parishworkers (lectors) hospital chapl., counselling,urban industrial mission Sunday school teach. Youth work Deaconesses Kindergarten teachers Organists/Kantor Social worker	180 40 310 400 750 2500 56 40	yes	offices of bishop and parish ministers, theol. member of diocese chapter and church government and ecclesiastical board (juridical and other lay membership is open to women)	church elders (4000) Synod/ diocese (80) church council (19)	35% 20% 18%	Namibia -58,Botswana-1, Senegal -3, Tanzania -16, Ethiopia -14,Israel -7, Pakistan -8, Nepal -2, KongKong -4, Taiwan -14, Papua New Guinea -1, Japan, Egypt, Kenya = altogether 30
Church of Norway	yes	102 finished theol.educat. 60 students	yes,since 1961		all kinds	ordained ministers Sunday school teach. (from 11000,59% women)	27	yes	only 5 out of 10 bishops in Norway ordain women	parish council Synod/diocese church council	45% 20% 23%	YWCA many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America
Church of Sweden	yes	300	yes, since 1960		all kinds	ordained ministers Sunday school teach. religious. educat. Youth work	208 6000 10000	yes	all open	church elders Synods / diocese church council		no information available Rhodesia, South Africa Ethiopia, Tanzania India
Evangelical Luth.Church of Bavaria FRG	yes	about 120	yes, since 1976		all kinds	ordained minsters parish workers instruct.rel.education youth work women's work other	15 70 800 25 10 50	yes	all open	church elders Synod /diocese	27% 12%	World Day of Prayer WCC, LWF East Africa 6 New Guinea 4
Evangelical Luth.Church of Brunswick Germany/FRG	yes	4 ministers 15 students	yes,since 1968		all kinds	ordained minister parish worker Sunday school. teach. instruct.rel.Educate. youth work women's work	4 1 200 30 50 120	yes	all open	church elders approx. Synod/diocese church council	600 15 5	- Japan
Evangelical Luth.Church of Hanover Germany/FRG	yes	66	yes,since 1963		all kinds	ordained minister parish worker Sunday school teach., instruct. rel.Educate. youth work,women's work (no exact figures avail	66 303	yes	all open	church elders Synod/diocese church council	? 12	Ethiopia,Botswana, Peru, Tanzania,Zambia,Chile. South Africa,Venezuela Brazil,Mexico,Hong Kong, Singapore,Indonesia,India Papua New Guinea
Evangelical Luth.Church of Schleswig-Holstein Germany,FRG	yes	35	yes,since 1966		administr.sacraments social services, rel. education, women's work	ordained minister parish worker instructor rel.Educate. youth / women's work other	35 127 4 99 4420	yes	all open	church elders Synods church council	1321 15 2	- India
Evangelical Luth.Church of Thuringia Germany/ GDR	yes	42	yes,since 1967	no	all kinds	ordained minister parish worker youth work women's work other	42 ? 6 6 1	yes	all open	church elders Synod/diocese church council	25% 5 2	

AFRICA

Country and Church	Possibility of theol. Education	Number of female theologians	Ordination to full ministry	Ordination to limited ministry	What kind of ministry do ordained women perform ?	In what capacities are women employed in the church ?	Number	Does the church employ married women ?	Positions <u>not</u> open to ordained or other women	Representation on official church bodies	Representation on international bodies (voluntary)	Involvement in missionary work outside the country
Evangelical Luth.Church of Cameroon	no	none	no	no	-	Parish worker	1		-	church council (Missionary)	1	-
Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Ethiopia	yes	none	no	no	-	Sunday school teach. Women's work Youth work Bible women	?	yes	-	church elders church council	6 4	World Day of Prayer
Malagasy Lutheran Church	yes	?	no	no	none	Bible women Sunday school teach. Religious Educat.		yes	-	church elders Synod/diocese church council		not known
Lutheran Church of Nigeria	no	none	no	no	none	-		no	none open	church council		none
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania	yes	not known	not yet	not yet	without ordination: pastoral counselling, youth work, social services, rel.educat., preaching, women's work	Parish worker appr. full time staff for women's work	98 60	yes	positions are open as far as they are open to any lay people	church elders in each congregation, in each Synod / diocese		not known
Lutheran Church of Christ in the Sudan	yes	very few	no	no	-	Bible women(veryfew) Sunday school teach. Relig. Education Youth work, Women's work		yes	ordination	church elders synod/diocese (very few) church council		none

LATIN AMERICA

Country and church	Possibility of theol. Education	Number of female theologians	Ordination to full ministry	Ordination to limited ministry	What kind of ministry do ordained women perform ?	In what capacities are women employed by the church ?		Does the church employ married women ?	Position <u>not</u> open to ordained or other women	Representation on official church bodies		Representation on international bodies	Involvement in missionary work outside the country
Evangelical Church of Luth.Confes- sion in Brazil	yes	4	yes,since 1975		all kinds	ordained minister	4	yes	all open	church elders	?	WDP - member of Regional Committee	no
					parish worker	?							
					Bible women	?							
					instruct.rel.educat.	40							
					women's work	5							

NORTH AMERICA

American Lutheran Church	yes		yes, since 1970		all kinds	ordained minister parish worker Sunday school teach.	12 ? ?	yes		church council	5	Brazil, Columbia, India, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Japan, Central Afric.Republ, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa, Senegal, Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea, Madagascar
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